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# THE ODOSTA

*THE FIRST CENTURY  
OF HER TIME*

THE STORY OF HER LIFE AND A  
HISTORY OF PERSONS AND THINGS  
CONNECTED THEREWITH

BY

CHAS. ELTON PARSONS

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA"  
AND "THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA"







# THEODOSIA

**THE FIRST GENTLEWOMAN  
OF HER TIME**

**THE STORY OF HER LIFE, AND A  
HISTORY OF PERSONS AND EVENTS  
CONNECTED THEREWITH**

BY  
**CHAS. FELTON PIDGIN**

*Author of "The Burr Trilogy," "Little Burr," "Blennerhassett,"  
and "The Climax"*



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BELMONT, MASS.**

THE GREAT TRIUMVIRATE



JEFFERSON



HAMILTON



AARON BURR

THEODOSIA

[Mrs. Theodosia Burr Alston, Daughter of Vice President  
Aaron Burr, and Wife of Governor Joseph Alston.]



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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

IN MEMORY OF

THEODOSIA





## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE biographer or historian must have the help of others. His work is not one of imagination, but the recording of facts — or what are deemed to be such. In books, magazines, newspapers, official records, old letters, family Bibles, and many other receptacles, are stowed away the material that he needs. How can he unlock these treasure-houses? Only by the help of those who know where they are, or who possess them.

In the preparation of this work, I have had aid from hundreds of sources. My own reading and investigations have been supplemented by the willing assistance of many who have sent me books, newspapers, clippings, and photographs.

To enumerate them all would require pages of this volume; their names, however, may be found in the "Personal and Topical Index" which forms part of Chapter XX.


To those who have courteously allowed the use of copyrighted material, my special thanks are due. My intention has been, in all such cases, to give credit in connection with the article or illustration. If any omission has been made, I shall deeply regret it.

Few books, if any, are perfect, and this one may contain errors of omission and commission; but, I trust, after due allowance is made, that the reader will admit that new and convincing material has been discovered; that many errors have been corrected; that many harassing doubts have been set at rest; and that I and my assistants, in the words of an old writer, "have endeavored well."

CHAS. FELTON PIDGIN.

WIDEVIEW FARM, BELMONT, MASS.,  
Aug. 15, 1907.





## THE "TRUTHS" OF HISTORY

THE fact that a large proportion of all the history of all the world is false is perhaps known to few people. That American history, particularly, abounds in errors, blunders, and stereotyped falsities, is known to even a smaller number. Walpole, wishing to amuse his father after an unusually wearisome day, proposed reading to him from a book of history. "Anything but history," said the old man: "for history must be false."

When it is considered that historians in every period of the world have been narrowed and biased by personal opinion and surrounding circumstances, the wisdom of this remark is perceived. The worst part of it all is that once a mistake has been made it has rarely been rectified, each succeeding historian being content to accept as facts the work of those who went before him. The ultimate result of this was that the mistakes were believed by those who read them, and events in history that never happened, or were false, were accepted by the world and ever after known as the markers of important epochs.

It would take volumes to contain all the blunders, small, large, and indifferent, that historians have made, and the lamentable part of it is that the old blunders are constantly being made over again, so that with the errors that are bound to occur in the history of the present, and the mistakes that our forefathers made and which we are still making, history in time will become little more than a long though extremely interesting work of fiction. — *Boston Post*, Oct. 21, 1906.

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# THEODOSIA

## CHAPTER I

### HER ANCESTRY

**P**RIDE of birth! An honorable ancestry! It has been said of Edmund Burke (1): "No one that ever lived used the general ideas of the thinker more successfully to judge the particular problems of the statesman. No one has ever come so close to the details of practical politics, and at the same time remembered that these can only be understood and only dealt with by the aid of the broad conceptions of political philosophy. And what is more than all for perpetuity of fame, he was one of the great masters of the high and difficult art of composition." The veneration shown by the Oriental nations of their ancestors is well known, and Burke voiced a sentiment most pertinent to the subject before us and one entirely in line with Oriental opinion. He said: "He only deserves to be remembered by posterity who treasures up and preserves the history of his ancestors."

When the aristocracies of birth (which was often synonymous with rank), education, and wealth were compared in the olden days, that of birth led, as is written above. That of education has always held the middle position. As honor and education were more valued than money, wealth could not get higher than third place, the bottom of the list. In



modern times the aristocracy of birth has needed stronger foundations than memories of past great deeds, and wealth made by others now largely supplies the superstructure for the maintenance of old and noble families. An English statistician has computed that the two hundred or more American wives of the English nobility and gentry have brought their husbands nearly two hundred millions of American-made fortunes as financial keystones to support the decaying English homes of those with an ancestry of record.

Next to pride of ancestry, or connection by descent from a particular family, comes pride of blood or racial ancestry. A Stewart, a Douglas, or a McGregor may point with pride to those ancestors who bore the same name, but he has an added feeling of pride when he remembers that he is a son of Old Caledonia.

We of America, who are descended from the original settlers, may or may not be proud of our Anglo-Saxon or Dutch origin. We are all Americans in name, but the old "blood will tell." The Declaration of Independence, so far as a pronunciamento could do so, made British rebels into American patriots by pen strokes. Eight years of war, full of death and destruction, were required before the patent of American birthright was granted. In 1785, Britons in blood were transformed into Americans in name. Now we have Americans in name and the blood of all the nations of Europe and the Orient, for these countries have sent us millions of their people to pass through the process of political transmutation. The naturalization laws have

taken the place of battlefields, but for all practical purposes the result is the same. True, we have not taken by conquest the soil of these countries, but we have taken the brain and the brawn which, if kept at home, would have made that soil more productive and valuable.

The genealogist is the scientist of ancestry. True, he does not make the original records, but it is he who searches them and constructs family trees. These trees have many branches, and the ardent student of genealogy has frequently found, after an expenditure of much time and money, that they point in as many different directions as their forest prototype. The genealogist follows promising clues. Church registers, official records, and the remembrances of oldest inhabitants carry him on his way rejoicing until he comes to the end of the branch and finds that certain descendants were of John, and not of James as he knows himself to be. Of the same family? Yes, but John and James parted company in 1733 or thereabouts, John going to the Massachusetts Bay Colonies, while James was a follower, perhaps, of Oglethorpe and went with him to Georgia. Each a strain of British blood, grafted upon two widely separate branches of the American tree.

All this by way of introduction. Our feet are not yet on solid ground, speaking genealogically, but when they are we shall deal with events, and many forgotten facts in American history, from 1756 to 1836 — eighty years, or more than man's allotted span of life — will be brought to life. They say the good die young, but an early death is not

an infallible certificate of goodness. The saying should read — some are too good to die so young, while others are not good enough to have lived so long, or to have even lived at all.

But goodness is relative. What was good and commendable once may be a misdemeanor or even a crime to-day. All depends upon the time and the manners of the time. One century is not a strictly-to-be-followed teacher for another; nor should we, of a later period, if we would be just, judge our predecessors by our present foot-rules of religion, morality, or politics.

Theodosia Burr was of English descent. Both her father and mother were British-born subjects. Her mother was the wife of a British officer, Colonel Aaron Burr being her second husband. Theodosia was born after the close of the Revolution, but before its results had been crystallized in the Constitution. We have said that her mother's first husband was a British soldier; so was his brother during the War of the Revolution, and in later years other members of her first husband's family fought under England's banner.

On the paternal side she was not a descendant of the nobility or gentry or the military arm of England, but of an honest husbandman, who sought in America that wider field of strenuous endeavor that was denied him in provincial England. The one of whom we write had no ancestral connection with crowns or coronets, but there was a coat-of-arms which we will describe later.

First we will take up her paternal ancestors one by one, commingled as they may be by marriage,

and follow them in their lives until we reach the cradle in which lay, on June 23, 1783, Theodosia Burr, daughter of Colonel Aaron Burr and Theodosia Prevost Burr, who had been married on July 2 of the previous year.

What we are to write of our subject, and of the men, women, and events connected therewith, will be in the historical and not in the biographical vein. The writer of biography is too prone to magnify the virtues and minimize the faults of the subject of his theme. Too many biographers are inclined to imitate the Iliad and Odyssey, and for many Plutarch's Lives is a model which they follow as closely as may be. But to write the lives of heroes of antiquity calls for a different pen-point than is needed to record the doings of a modern man or woman.

The editor of Harper's Magazine (2) writes thus:

We do not ask of these masters that they shall have the striking eminence of the greatest writers of the past. The conditions of that kind of eminence do not exist in the present. It is enough in this more level world we live in, that the servant should be as the master, on the gospel and democratic principle that mastery is service.

Our writers are making a new literature, especially in a new prose literature, which, if not more eminent than that of the past, yet is in advance of it in the line of evolutionary tendencies. It has widened and deepened the currents of human sympathy, and enlarged the scope of a rational appreciation of the truths of life, and it has done this without any dependence upon the devices, whether contrived or ready at hand, which helped an older literature to a more imposing grandeur. In the simplest way, without gloss or pretence, it meets the demands of a deeply cultivated sensibility. In a word, it serves.

The influences which should control the historian in his work are well stated in the introduction to Melvin's Journal (3):

No better rule for the writing of a history has ever been laid down, or one that would be better worth adopting by historians, with their best efforts to strictly follow, than that one which was enunciated, not very long ago, by our venerated pontiff, Leo XIII, relative to some proposed publication from the Vatican archives. Said he: "The first law of history is not to dare to tell a lie, the second not to fear to tell the truth; besides, let the historian be beyond all suspicion of favoring or hating anyone whomsoever."

Had this excellent rule been always followed in the past, the world might possibly have been spared some volumes long accepted as authority. But with no motives of disparagement, and sensible that many eminent writers have published as much truth as that portion of the world which they addressed was willing to receive, this brief summary of historical research is offered as a contribution to the literature regarding one event in the Revolutionary War.

In other words, that a plain, unvarnished recital of the truth is more potent with the reader of the present day than the grandiloquent periods and oftentimes fulsome eulogy indulged in by many biographers and historians.

Much of the information contained hereinafter, relating to the Burr Family, is condensed from a voluminous work containing a genealogical record of the family from 1193 to 1891, by Charles Burr Todd (4).

Between the years 1630 and 1640, three Puritans — heads of families — set sail for the New World. The first of these to arrive was Jehu Burr. He came in 1630, with Winthrop, and settled in Roxbury, Massachusetts. He accompanied William Pynchon, the founder of Springfield, Massachusetts, and eventually settled in Fairfield, Connecticut. The second to arrive was Benjamin Burr, one of the founders of the city of Hartford, Connecticut, in 1635. The third in point of immigration was

the Reverend Jonathan Burr, founder of the Dorchester branch, who arrived in Massachusetts in 1639. The fourth, or New Jersey branch, was founded in 1681, by Henry Burr, a wealthy Quaker and an associate of William Penn. The descendants of Jehu and Benjamin Burr are found principally in Connecticut and New York, although they are quite numerous in Illinois and Iowa. The descendants of Jonathan Burr are located in nearly every State in the Union, although they are most numerous in Maine and Massachusetts. The descendants of Henry Burr settled largely in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania.

Mr. Todd's work covers 535 large octavo pages, and it is manifestly impossible to give more than a slight summary of the valuable genealogical information that it contains. In a succeeding volume of this work, entitled "A Century Later," an abstract will be made of the information contained therein, with a view of showing the wide range of professions and occupations in which the descendants of the original settlers by the name of Burr have engaged, and also their wide distribution throughout the States of the Union and even foreign countries.

Aaron Burr was of the fifth generation from Jehu Burr, and the 137th of Jehu Burr's known descendants. Theodosia, the daughter of Colonel Aaron Burr, and the subject of this volume, was of the sixth generation from Jehu Burr and the 276th of his known descendants.

A careful examination of the volume discloses the fact that of the army of descendants of the four original settlers by the name of Burr, twenty-two

have been named Aaron; eleven of these belonged to the Connecticut branch, seven to the Hartford, one to the Dorchester, and three to the New Jersey. One of the female descendants was named Aarona. It is a somewhat peculiar coincidence that two of the female descendants married men by the name of Hamilton — one being named Alexander Hamilton and the other William Hamilton. Another fact is particularly worthy of notice. The only women connected with the Burr family, from the earliest date to the present, who have borne the name Theodosia were Mrs. Theodosia Prevost Burr, the wife of Colonel Aaron Burr, and her daughter, Theodosia Burr Alston. It seems strange indeed that no member of the Burr family has ever named a daughter Theodosia.

The first man, Adam, is said to have been named from the substance of which he was formed — *red earth*, and, quite naturally, he in turn gave to his children names suggested by the substances or objects sensible to his touch or vision. The same plan, as is well known, was followed by the North American Indians. The Romans are said to have first dignified the individual by the application of two or more names. Many of the old English surnames admit of an easy explanation. Some are derived from the occupation, as Farmer, Shepherd, Walker, etc. A large class is derived from mental and physical peculiarities, such as Short, Keene, Long, etc.; others from colors, such as Black, White, Green, etc.; some from birds, as Swan, Drake, Swallow, Partridge, Hawk, etc.; and others from the names of animals, as Wolfe, Lamb, Lyon, Hogg,

Fox, etc. Many names have been formed by the affixing of the word "son" to the christian name of the father; as, for instance, Jackson, Johnson, Williamson, etc. Probably the most fertile basis of the English nomenclature as regards persons has been derived from the names of places. It is stated that there is scarcely a village in Normandy which has not surnamed some family in England, and in this list of families, composed from Normandy, Bretagne, and the Netherlands, is found the name of Burr — anciently and properly written Beur. At one time it was written Buer, and pronounced Bure, something like the modern French word "Beurre" (butter), but the Anglo-Saxons eliminated the "e" and added a final "r," giving the name to us in its present form. The name is, undoubtedly, of German origin, although before it was transplanted to this country it had been known for five centuries in England. It is not very common there, but numbers among its members several families of the nobility.

Mr. Todd's work supplies the following information in regard to the coat-of-arms of the Burr family:

From Walford's "County Families of the United Kingdom" we extract the following:

"Daniel Higford Davall Burr, eldest son of Lieut. General Daniel Burr, by his second wife Mary, daughter and heir of James Davis, Esq., of Chepston, Co. Monmouth, born in 1811, married 1839 Anne Margaretta, only daughter of the late Capt. Edward Scobell, R. N., and has issue.

"Mr. Burr was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, is a Magistrate for Co. Gloucester, and a J. P. and Q. L. for Berks and Co. Hereford. Lord of the manor of Aldermaston, and patron of two



livings; he was M. P. for Hereford 1837-48. This family was formerly seated in Herefordshire, and Mr. Burr purchased Aldermaston from the Congreves in 1847."

Beside this there are several families of Burrs seated in Essex Co. at Ramsay, Dover Court, and Wrabnese. Three coats-of-arms are found in the family: One is in the possession of Mr. Henry T. Burr of Boston, a member of the Dorchester branch; a second is owned by Miss Hawley of Bridgeport, Conn., a member of the Fairfield branch, and on comparing the two it was found that they were alike in every particular — a fact which points to a common origin for those two branches at least; the third is in the possession of Mrs. Detheridge of Washington, Va., and was given to her grandfather by his cousin, Col. Aaron Burr, soon after the latter's return from England in 1812.

The coat-of-arms is from the College of Arms, England. The blazon is — *Ermine, on a chief indented sable, two lions rampant, or.* The motto is: *Virtus honoris janua*, which freely translated means, "Virtue is the key of honor." Another reading warranted by the language, and probably more literal, is, "Manliness is the door of honor." The name given in connection with the coat-of-arms is spelled Burre, another copy of which is in the possession of Mrs. Julia Eliza Shotland, who has written a novel, upon the cover and title-page of which the Burre coat-of-arms is given with the same motto — *Virtus honoris janua*.



The Burre Coat of Arms





## CHAPTER II

### REVEREND TIMOTHY EDWARDS

**WE** can often make haste forwards by progressing backwards. Let us do so now to avoid mystification of the reader. Theodosia's grandfather was the Rev. Aaron Burr. Her great-grandfather was the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, a world-wide known man. Her great-great-grandfather was the Rev. Timothy Edwards, who married Esther, a daughter of the Rev. Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, Mass. If religion and virtue are transmittible qualities, Theodosia must have inherited a goodly share.

It is often said that the son was a greater man than his father. Jonathan Edwards had a good opinion of his parents. In his diary he wrote: "I now plainly perceive what great obligations I am under to love and honor my parents. I have good reason to believe that their counsel and education have been my making, notwithstanding at the time of it it seemed to do me little good."

On October 5, 1903, exercises were held at South Windsor, Conn., in commemoration of the birthday of Jonathan Edwards, two hundred years before. He was acclaimed as a great theologian, evangelist, moralist, and metaphysician; but the Rev. C. A. Jaquith, pastor of the First Congrega-

tional Church at South Windsor, Conn., in his address of welcome said: "Much as some may wish to trace the greatness of Jonathan Edwards to the Stoddards, I believe that Timothy Edwards was a greater man than most historians have understood. Those who heard both Jonathan and his father, called the father the more learned and animated."

The Rev. Timothy Edwards was the father of eleven children, Jonathan being the fifth child and only son. The girls, ten in number, were often referred to by their father as his "sixty feet of daughters."

The period from 1660 to 1735 witnessed the "Puritan decline." The people were not so good in those days as they had been when Elder Brewster and Governor Winthrop were leading spirits. In 1679 a "Reforming Synod met at Boston and called the attention of the Great and General Court to the necessity of reformation as regarded no less than thirteen evils; among these were pride, neglect of divine worship, profanity, Sabbath-breaking, irreligion in the home, intemperance (including the heathenish and idolatrous practice of health-drinking), licentiousness, inordinate affection for the world, and great lack of public spirit." If these allegations were true, our forefathers had certainly made great progress backwards in less than sixty years from the landing at Plymouth.

The Rev. Cotton Mather thought that the people had forgotten their errand into the wilderness, although he partially solaced himself with the belief that "there was still more of true religion and a larger number of the strictest saints in this country than in any other."

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What was called the "Halfway Covenant" was considered largely responsible for the "Puritan decline." When Jonathan Edwards entered his ministry at Northampton, Prof. Samuel Simpson, Ph.D., of the Hartford, Conn., Theological Seminary, says: "The tone of public morals was shockingly low. Intemperance and other forms of vice abounded, especially among the young." The Rev. Solomon Stoddard, Theodosia's great-great-grandfather, advocated the principles of the "Halfway Covenant" as early as 1679. It had been in operation for twenty years when young Jonathan Edwards went to Northampton as assistant to his grandfather, and Jonathan practised it for twenty years longer. Professor Simpson says: "The effect of the measure was to throw the church doors wide open. Unregenerate persons, whose lives were not scandalous, were invited to partake of the Lord's Supper as a 'converting ordinance.' The church was soon filled with men and women who made no pretension to spiritual renewal."

The parish of which Timothy Edwards was pastor was called "Windsor Farmes," and he officiated for nearly sixty years. His home was a low, two-story house, which stood in what is now the town of South Windsor, on a slight eminence on the eastern bank of the Connecticut River. The property was given to him by his father, Richard Edwards, who was a Hartford merchant and not in the priestly line. Richard's father was William Edwards, who came over from London about 1640 and engaged in mercantile business.

And now Professor Simpson brings forth a new

line of defence for Theodosia's father in these words: "The grandmother of Jonathan Edwards, the first wife of Richard Edwards of Hartford, was Elizabeth Tuthill ('Tuttle), in whose veins the taint of insanity evidently flowed, which accounts for the strange outcroppings of depravity which from time to time have appeared in the Edwards race, *the most notable instance of which is the case of his* (the Rev. Jonathan's) *grandson, Aaron Burr.*" Strange that so astute a lawyer as Colonel Burr did not avail himself of a plea of inherited mania in the notable trial at Richmond, Virginia.

So much is known and has been written about the Edwardses, that it is interesting to learn more of Solomon Stoddard, Theodosia's maternal great-great-grandfather. He was the son of Anthony Stoddard, who came from London, England, to Boston, Mass., in 1609, was admitted a free man in 1640, and was for twenty-five years a representative to the Great and General Court. Young Solomon was graduated from Harvard College in 1662; he was its first librarian, and afterwards became minister of the church at Northampton, in which town his descendants are still living. One of his descendants, Francis Hovey Stoddard, has been Professor of English Literature in New York University since 1888, residing in New York City (5).

From an article by Mrs. H. M. Plunkett we copy, by permission, the following (6):

On November 6, 1694, Rev. Timothy Edwards, who had been chosen to become the pastor of a newly formed church at East Windsor, Conn. — sometimes known as Windsor Farms — was married in Northampton, Mass., to Miss Esther Stoddard, daughter of the minister

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of that town. There is no record of how the lady looked, nor of what she wore on the occasion, the chronicles of that time only noting the fact that Miss Stoddard had enjoyed superior advantages for education, having been sent to Boston for that purpose. The husband was twenty-four; the bride twenty-two. All New England looked to Harvard College at that time to stamp the hall-mark on ability, and no doubt Miss Esther was duly proud of the fact that the man of her choice had been endowed with the degree of Bachelor of Arts in the morning, and that of Master of Arts in the afternoon of the same day, an unprecedented act on the part of the college, and a tribute to the unsurpassed scholarship of Mr. Edwards — a scholarship that we shall see was always kept bright and never allowed to lapse into desuetude during a long life.

The wedding journey of the couple, including some family visits, lasted eight days, when they arrived in the town where he was to be pastor for sixty-three years, and where she was to live a beautiful and influential life as his helper, and where, even after her husband's death, it is recorded that she was beloved for her Christian helpfulness in doing all that she could to increase the influence of his successor. Very few parishes could, in that primitive time, pay a salary adequate to support a minister, without some extraneous assistance — this assistance often taking the form of a farm. In Mr. Edwards' case, his father, who was a successful merchant of Hartford, made him the free gift of a farm and built him a house on it, but as this was not yet completed, the newly married pair occupied at first temporary quarters elsewhere. At length it was done and it was an uncommonly fine and really "advanced" house, for the period. It stood with its long front to the street, the bare architectural blankness of this front being broken at the centre by a projection which formed a porch about the front door on the first story, and in the second, made a room of closet-like proportions, but called the "study" — within the walls of which were produced for sixty-three years the sermons that formed the chief intellectual pabulum of that people, outside the Bible. Few and small were the windows, made of tiny diamond panes set in lead, eloquent to the costliness of glass. Our ancestors held the theory that an air-space under a house made it cold, so this house had no visible under-pinning, but seemed planted in the soil. The second story projected beyond the first, tradition has it, so as to be able to shoot Indian marauders, of which, in this vicinity, there were too



many for the comfort of the intruding pale-faces. The roof was steep — made of “rived” (shrunken) shingles, which were never changed, and still serviceable one hundred and eighteen years afterward, when the house was taken down. The stepping-stone was utilized again by the man who built upon its site, but in 1834 it was bought from him and made the corner-stone of the Theological Institute of Connecticut. The house had some very superior woodwork on the inside, one feature of which was a bench, running round three sides of one of the rooms, and which has an important relation to our theme.

As New England parishes were rated, this of East Windsor was esteemed one of the best. Nearly every parishioner was a farmer; even the owner of the only grist-mill and the store-keeper had their farms. An account-book belonging to a deacon, and the Rev. Mr. Edwards’ “rate-book” (really the parish record) are still extant, and as the latter gentleman had a habit of making quaint and piquant memoranda in connection with some of the items of cash or produce paid to him, they throw a flood of light on the manners, customs, and ideas of the time. Payments were faithfully, but not always promptly, made, and the minister found it impossible to live on his salary without adding the labor of a tutor; hence he always had young men fitting for college in his family, and his rate-book shows that young men who could not spare time in the day came to him in the evenings to be instructed in penmanship.

The meeting-house was not completed till three years after Mr. Edwards’ marriage — the congregation meanwhile assembling in a barn — and although he exercised every function of the Congregational priesthood, he was not formally ordained until the two ceremonies of dedicating the church and the complete induction of the pastor, called ordination, could be combined in one joyful occasion. It occurred in 1698. Previous to this his house had been completed, and two of the young women, whose completed circle is ten, had appeared on this earthly scene. This double ceremonial was the happy goal towards which both pastor and people had been looking for many years, and accustomed as we are to think of those early Puritans as leading austere and joyless lives, it is a surprise to learn that the religious ceremonies were followed by an Ordination Ball in the minister’s house — one of the invitations in the young pastor’s handwriting, bearing his autograph, being still in existence.

A careful list of “provisions laide in at the house of Mr. Edwards for



**WHERE  
JONATHAN EDWARDS  
WAS BORN**

**Where Jonathan Edwards was born, at Windsor  
Farmes, Conn.**



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his ordination," is still extant in the account-book of his accurate deacon. Of actual viands sent, there were 88 pounds of "beefe," 14 of mutton, 18 of veal; souger, 10 pounds; wheat, meal, cheese, butter, eggs, salt, pepper, sider, rum, malt, hops, wine, and money distinctly called "wine-money," and also spice-money, while many gave actual cash. We feel justified in believing that "everybody who was anybody" was invited to partake of this generous feast, and we are certain that that parish had at least one "jolly good time" in its life.

Mrs. Edwards had a high ideal of the loftiness of the pastor's vocation, and, that her husband might be free to fulfil its duties, took upon herself the burden of their temporalities—so that her gifted and honored spouse could educate his men, and care for the souls of his parishioners, unhampered by petty cares. When there was a question of how many and what hides the tanner ought to return to him, he says, "My wife knows"; and other references to her show that she "looked to the ways of her household," notwithstanding the superior Boston education she had received. Of her eleven children, the fifth was a son—the celebrated and *much-maligned* Jonathan Edwards. The rest were daughters, the youngest born when the oldest was twenty-two. It was a busy and no doubt a lively household, and it is pleasant to read that "From the house the land sloped toward the east to a brook that flowed at the foot of a steeper hill, which was then crowned with a beautiful forest of primeval trees. . . . To this spot Mr. Edwards was accustomed to go for seclusion, and there his son Jonathan built the booth wherein he held soul-inspiring converse with God." We can imagine him escaping in desperation from such a girls'-nest as the house must have been to this precursor of the modern "den."

As the minds of the ten daughters began to unfold, and as there were no schools to send them to, the father undertook to train them himself. He did not stop to inquire whether co-educating his girls right along with the fitting-for-college students would lead to atrophy of the muscles, or of the affections, but just did it. He had a school, with a high standard, beneath his own roof. Harvard and Yale Colleges accepted "Mr. Edwards' students" without examination; and that he held his girls to the same standard is proved by the fact that when called away from home, as he often was in his capacity of eminent divine, he left the instruction in Latin and Greek to his daughters, and particularly directed that they shall not fail to hear the recitations of the young men, in the letters that he sends back. In his account-

book he records every day's instruction to these young men, which was paid for at the rate of three shillings a week, and makes note of the time given to them by his daughters, for we may be sure that the money value of these services by the co-educated ten was not ignored by them. Among the credits in his account-book is a memorandum of a shilling paid by one North to my daughter Mary for covering a fan, and there are other similar entries. That a knowledge of Latin and Greek had not eradicated the fondness for distinctively feminine work is shown by the fact that specimens of Miss Mary's embroidery — a scarf, an apron, and a pair of slippers — now owned by the Connecticut Historical Society — can to-day be seen in the Hartford Athenæum.

For this work the lady first spun and wove the linen cloth of the foundation and created the wools, discovering the dyes with which to color them in the flowers and leaves and barks and nuts of the trees. She could conventionalize the flowers of the field; and, as Mr. Edwards credits Deacon Rockwell, who was a worker in wood, with two pairs of "heels," we can be almost sure they were to be attached to Miss Mary's embroidered slippers; only lately a pair of needle-pointed slippers, with heels two and a quarter inches high, contemporaneous with these, have been found in the vicinity. So even these co-educated women had their little weaknesses and did not wear hygienic shoes; and while we are taught to believe that the simple dietetics of that day gave people sounder teeth than ours, there are frequent credits to Deacon Skinner for drawing a tooth for Esther — or Abigail — or Lucy.

### The Rev. Timothy Edwards (7)

was a man of erudition, and watched with solicitous anxiety over his only son, of whom he speaks in his letters as "the boy Jonathan," not an inapt designation when we recall the fact that he was the only son among ten sisters who grew to womanhood, and who are facetiously called by Timothy Edwards, their father, his "sixty feet of daughters." The law of heredity must have largely influenced the formation of Edwards' character. The ancestral motto of his migratory ancestor had been: "Everything with God, nothing without God."

In the Hartford Courant of Monday, October 5, 1903, under the heading "Letters from Noted People," was one from Mrs. Solomon Stoddard, written to her daughter, the wife of the Rev. Tim-

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othy Edwards of East Windsor, Conn., congratulating her on the birth of her son Jonathan, who afterwards became the Rev. Jonathan Edwards.

The rate-book of the Rev. Timothy Edwards has been previously referred to. In 1735 he makes comparisons between the cost of living then and in 1094, which was the period of his settlement. He says that rum was sold in Hartford in former years for 2 shillings for the single gallon, and now he hears it is 18 shillings, which leads him to the conclusion that rum is nine times as dear as when he first settled among them. In considering the cost of labor, he says: "Negro was formerly 90 pounds; my Negro was; now 200 pounds for a Negro woman." This entry shows conclusively that it was not considered inappropriate, in those days, for a clergyman to buy a human being; and if public sentiment countenanced the purchase of a negro, it probably did not object to his sale.

Mr. Edwards charged the son of the widow of Samuel Grant, Jr., as follows: "For a pint of rum and a few squoses (lemons), 1 shilling, 3 pence. For making my cloes and beveridge, 1 pound, 18 shillings, and 3 pence."

The following is from a private letter, dated October 22, 1903 (8).

Volume I, of "Ancient Windsor, Connecticut," by Stiles, page 556, contains a picture of the Timothy Edwards house. It is hard to believe that it was there he raised his ten tall daughters — one of whom, Elizabeth, was my ancestor — and his illustrious son Jonathan. In Mrs. Plunkett's "Ten Co-educated Girls Two Hundred Years Ago," you will find an invitation to "my daughter Betty's wedding." That Betty was my ancestor, Elizabeth. When I was in South Windsor, I cut some pieces of stone from the old foundation of the house. There

is a picture of it in a recent number of the "Congregationalist." I am interested in your work because Theodosia Burr was my third cousin, once removed, and everything that concerns her or her father is interesting to me. I enclose my genealogy back to Timothy Edwards. I have a scrap book which I call my "We and Us Book." In it I put nothing except from the pen of a person to whom I can trace a blood relationship, and articles about such relatives. Are you aware that I am directly descended from Cedric, the first of the West Saxon kings. Back through Alfred the Great, I am of the 43rd generation. It comes down to us through William Tuttle, whose daughter Elizabeth married Richard Edwards, father of Rev. Timothy Edwards. I have reason to be proud of Alfred, but I don't care much for some of the others. Do you know Ednah Proctor (Mrs. Henry Hayes)? She is the daughter of Colonel Isaac Edwards Clarke, and the sister of John Proctor Clarke, Justice of the Supreme Court of New York. She is a writer of some note and I wish to know how she is connected with the Edwardses and Clarks. The last work I have seen of hers is a prize story published in the New York Herald, entitled "A Tale of the Jumel Mansion," and has, of course, for one of its characters Aaron Burr, but does not deal at all or refer to his marriage with Madame Jumel.

Elizabeth Edwards	(sister and brother)	Jonathan Edwards
married		
Jabez Huntington		
Jerusha Huntington	(first cousins)	Esther Edwards
married		married
Dr. John Clarke		Pres't Aaron Burr
Dr. Thaddeus Clarke	(second cousins)	Aaron Burr
Joseph B. Clarke	(third cousins)	Theodosia Burr
Harriette Clarke Sprague,	third cousin once removed to Theodosia Burr.	

We have now placed before the reader the few historical facts which are extant concerning Timothy Edwards and Solomon Stoddard, the great-great-grandfathers of Theodosia. Our next step will be a forward one, covering a generation or more.

## CHAPTER III

### THE REVEREND JONATHAN EDWARDS

**F**EW clergymen, or even men, have had more written about them than the subject of this chapter. That he was the maternal great-grandfather of Theodosia demands that his life and character should receive ample treatment in this volume. It is not with the chronology of his life that we are principally interested. It is with what he was and what he did more than with when he did it. His biographers, following tradition and custom, have said the same things over and over again, and usually in the same way. Scores of books have been examined, and in but few of them has there been found any novelty or variety in expression. In preparing this chapter, the rule has been followed to incorporate what was salient in many, rather than to make too copious extracts from one authority.

The following biography of Mr. Edwards was published about six years after his death. Those that have appeared since, although written in accordance with the predilections of the different authors, have contained but little additional in the way of fact. For that reason it is thought best to rely upon the earliest published work (9).

Mr. Jonathan Edwards was born October 5, 1703, at Windsor, a town in Connecticut. His father was the Rev. Mr. Timothy Edwards,



minister of the gospel on the East side of the Connecticut River, in Windsor. He began to reside and preach at Windsor in November, 1694, but was not ordained till July, 1698. He died Jan. 27, 1758, in the 89th year of his age, about two months before the death of his son Jonathan. He was in the work of the ministry above 59 years. From his first beginning to reside and preach there, to his death, are above 63 years, and he was able to attend to the work of the ministry and preach constantly till within a few years before his death. . . . On the 6th of November, 1694, he was married to Miss Esther Stoddard, daughter of the late famous Mr. Solomon Stoddard of Northampton. They had 11 children, all of whom lived to adult years, ten of whom were daughters, and one son named Jonathan.

Mr. Jonathan Edwards entered Yale College in 1716, and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in September, 1720, a little before he was 17 years old. He had the character of a sober youth, and a good scholar while he was a member of the College. In his second year at College, and thirteenth of his age, he read Locke on the Human Understanding, with great delight and profit. His uncommon genius, by which he was, as it were by Nature, formed for closeness of thought and deep penetration, now began to exercise and discover itself. Taking that book into his hand upon some occasion not long before his death, he said to some of his select friends who were then with him, that he was beyond expression entertained and pleased with it when he read it in his youth at college; that he was as much engaged, and had more satisfaction and pleasure in studying it, than the most greedy miser in gathering up handfuls of silver and gold from some new discovered treasure.

Though he made good proficiency in all the arts and sciences, and had an uncommon taste for natural philosophy, which he cultivated to the end of his life with that justness and accuracy of thought which was almost peculiar to him; yet moral philosophy or divinity was his favorite study, and in this he early made great progress.

He lived at college near two years after he took his first degree, designing and preparing for the work of the ministry, after which, having passed the pre-requisite trials, he was licensed to preach the gospel as a candidate. And being pitched upon and applied to by a number of ministers in New England, who were entrusted to act in behalf of the Presbyterians at New York, as a fit person to be sent to them, he complied with their request and went to New York the be-



Rev. Jonathan Edwards.



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ginning of August, 1722, and preached there to very good acceptance about eight months. But by reason of the smallness of that society, and some special difficulties that attended it, he did not think they were in a capacity to settle a minister, with a rational prospect of answering the good ends proposed. He therefore left them the next spring, and retired to his father's house, where he spent the summer in close study.

In September, 1723, he received his degree of Master of Arts, about which time he had invitations from several congregations to come among them in order to settle in the work of the ministry; but being chosen tutor of Yale College the next spring, in the year 1724, being in the 21st year of his age, he retired to the college and attended the business of tutor there about two years.

While he was in this place he was applied to by the people at Northampton, with an invitation to come and settle in the work of the ministry there, with his grandfather Stoddard, who, by reason of his great age, stood in need of assistance. He therefore resigned his tutorship in September 1726, and accepted of their invitation; and was ordained in the work of the ministry at Northampton, colleague with his grandfather Stoddard, February 15, 1727, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, where he continued in the work of the ministry till June 22, 1750, twenty-three years and four months.

The Rev. Theodore Dwight Woolsey, D.D., LL.D., former President of Yale College, thus refers to the early life of Mr. Edwards (10):

He was a Puritan boy, brought up in the simple manners of a new country parish and in the strict morals of a Puritan minister's family, unacquainted with temptation, and having no struggles to pass through such as appear in the history of Augustine, Luther, and some others of the greater lights of the Christian Church. He records his trouble in regard to his religious history in these words: "The chief thing that now makes me in any measure to question my good estate is my not having experienced conversion in those particular steps wherein the people of New England, and anciently the dissenters of Old England, used to experience it. Wherefore now resolved never to leave searching till I have satisfactorily found out the very bottom and foundation — the real reason why they used to be converted in those steps."

The Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D. (11), supplies some facts and incidents in the life of Mr. Edwards not found in other authorities. He states that the Edwards family was of Welsh extraction.

Although in the preceding chapter strong testimony was given as to the ability of Timothy Edwards, Professor Allen, in his biography of Jonathan Edwards, contends that it was chiefly to his mother that Jonathan was indebted for his intellectual inheritance:

She had received a superior education in Boston and is described as "tall, dignified, and commanding in appearance, affable and gentle in her manner, and regarded as surpassing her husband in native vigor and understanding."

Jonathan Edwards was the fifth child and only son in a family of eleven children. He was educated with his sisters, the older daughters assisting the father in the superintendence of his studies. A few of his letters remain, written while he was a boy, but they disclose little of his character. He appears as docile and receptive, an affectionate and sensitive nature, responding quickly and very deeply to the influences of his childhood. He was interested in his studies, ambitious to excel, and particularly a keen observer of the mysteries of the outward world and eager to discern its laws. Everything points to him as a child of rare intellectual precocity. When not more than twelve years old, he wrote a letter in a bantering style, refuting the idea of the materiality of the soul. At about the same age he wrote an elaborate and instructive account of the habits of the field spider, based upon his own observation.

Returning to his father's house after two years at New Haven, following his graduation, in order to carry on his theologian studies, he was soon after made a tutor in Yale College, an office which he held for two years (1724-1726), helping to overcome the shock to the College and the community caused by the secession of its rector, Mr. Cutler, Mr. Johnson, one of its tutors, and others, to the Episcopal Church. He was one of the pillar tutors and the glory of the College at this critical period. His tutorial renown was great and excellent. He

filled and sustained his office with great ability, dignity, and honor. For the honor of literature these things ought not to be forgotten.

From 1720 to 1726, from the age of seventeen to the age of twenty-three, runs the period during which he wrote his Resolutions and the greater part of his religious diary. His biographer (Dr. Sereno E. Dwight) says: "These are no ordinary Resolutions, and this is no common diary. It is, when we read them, as though we stood behind the veil witnessing the evolution of a great soul. Like Luther, he appears as in search for some high end of whose nature he is not clearly conscious. But he will be content with nothing but the highest result which it is open to man to achieve or for God of his grace to impart. Referring to this period of his life, some twenty years later, he remarks: 'I made the seeking of salvation the main business of my life.'"

Referring to the Rev. Solomon Stoddard, Mr. Edwards' grandfather, Mr. Banks says:

Mr. Stoddard lived in the days when, as Hutchinson remarks, "the elders continued to be consulted in every affair of importance. The share they held in temporal affairs added to the weight they had acquired from their spiritual employments, and now they were in high esteem." But for Mr. Stoddard there was felt something more than the usual respect and veneration. "The officers and leaders of Northampton," says Edwards, "imitated his manners, which were dogmatic, and thought it an excellency to be like him. Many of the people," he adds, "esteemed all his sayings as oracles, and looked upon him almost as a sort of deity." The Indians of the neighborhood, interpreting this admiration in their own way, spoke of Mr. Stoddard as "the Englishman's God."

Edwards was, at the time of the opening of his pastorate at Northampton, twenty-four years of age. He was very tall, being upwards of six feet in height, slenderly built, and of a very serious and grave manner. His face was of a feminine cast, implying at once a capacity for both sweetness and severity — the Johannine type of countenance, we should say, just as his spirit is that of St. John, rather than that of Peter or of Paul. It is a face which bespeaks a delicate and nervous organization.

It would seem that while at college Mr. Edwards

passed through a conflict of feeling somewhat similar to that endured by his grandson, Colonel Aaron Burr, although with a different result (12).

While in the senior class his second awakening took place, which was speedily followed by a second relapse. "In process of time," he writes, "my convictions and reflections wore off, and I entirely lost all those affections and delights, and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it, and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed, I was at times very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time in college, when it pleased God to seize me with a pleurisy, in which he brought me nigh unto the grave and shook me over the pit of hell; and yet it was not long after my recovery before I fell again into my old ways of sin."

At seventeen he graduated with great reputation for both knowledge and wisdom, and he dates his final and entire conversion shortly after. Its chief symptom he thus describes: "From my childhood up my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, choosing whom he would to eternal life, and hardening whom he pleased, leaving them eternally to perish and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me; but I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced and fully satisfied as to the sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men according to his sovereign pleasure. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty from that day to this, so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God's showing mercy and justice with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of as much as of anything I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times."

The example of the good man lives after him. This fact is forcibly shown in an article written by Edith A. Winship (13).

It was the spirit of the reformer and the purity of his nature that brought trouble upon this successful preacher. His open criticism of the habits and immoral reading of the young people in the

town involved many prominent families, and the consequent wrath brought about his sudden and harsh dismissal from the church. An ecclesiastical dispute contributed also to this action, and in this controversy Edwards maintained a doctrine that soon became a vital principle of the Puritan churches. Thus it happened that Jonathan Edwards found himself, at the age of forty-seven, with no means of support for his family of eight children. They were ostracized in the town, but Mrs. Edwards was able to get a little money by taking in work. Six months later Edwards took charge of a mission church in the village of Stockbridge, numbering twelve white families and one hundred and fifty Indian families. Indian wars were a reality in 1730, and Stockbridge, in the Colony of Massachusetts, was on the outskirts of civilization. Almost immediately Edwards set himself to exposing and punishing men who misappropriated the Indian funds, and he succeeded. He found abundant leisure here to write his treatise on "The Freedom of the Will" — a classic in metaphysics, and one of the few great books in English theology. Through this and other writings, the man who had been disgraced and banished more than regained his ascendancy; his former parishioners were repentant and apologetic, and his reputation as a thinker and theologian grew apace. Seven years he spent in seclusion and then he went to Princeton College as its President. Scarcely two months after, at the age of fifty-four, he died. "From the days of Plato," said a writer in the *Westminster Review*, "there has been no life of more simple and imposing grandeur than his."

He had been a dominant figure in New England through many years, and had left the imprint of his thought on the Puritan churches. His writings long held supreme authority; and in Europe, as well as in America, he was ranked among the great thinkers of the world. These achievements alone might well make a man memorable; but they are as nothing when compared with the power for good which he has exercised through posterity. The theology of Jonathan Edwards may be dead, and his books unread, but the man was greater than the theologian. In leaving to his children, and his children's children, the legacy that he gave, he did the best a man can do for the world.

After his dismissal from the church at Northampton, his future course seemed dubious and uncertain. Mrs. Edwards realized that all in the family who could work must bend their energies towards the support of a large family — but a way was opened for further usefulness.



The Indian mission at Stockbridge, a town about 60 miles from Northampton, being vacant by the death of the late Rev. Mr. Sergeant, the honored and reverend commissioners for Indian affairs in Boston, who have the care and direction of it, applied to Mr. Edwards as the most suitable person they could think of to intrust with that mission, and he was at the same time invited to come there by the inhabitants of Stockbridge. He decided to accept the invitation and was introduced and affixed as missionary to the Indians there, by an ecclesiastical council called for that purpose August 8, 1751.

When Mr. Edwards first engaged in the mission, there was a hopeful prospect of its being extremely serviceable under his care and influence, not only to that tribe of Indians which was settled at Stockbridge, but among the six nations. But on account of some differences of opinion that took place among those who had the chief management of affairs at Stockbridge, and also on account of a war breaking out between England and France, this hopeful prospect came to nothing.

Mr. Edwards' labors were attended with no remarkable visible success while at Stockbridge, though he performed the business of his mission to the good acceptance of the inhabitants in general. However, it proved a more quiet and, on many accounts, a more comfortable situation than he was in before. His time was not so much taken up with company as it was at Northampton, although many of his friends made visits to him. And he was not brought into contact with other churches as he was at Northampton. This was, probably, as useful a period of his life as any, for during this time he wrote the two last books that were published by him.

Again was he favored by fortune, or, as he would have termed it, aided by the Hand of God. Once more was a way opened by death for his further advancement.

On the 24th of September, 1757, the Rev. Mr. Aaron Burr, President of the New Jersey College, died, and at the next meeting of the trustees Mr. Edwards was chosen his successor, the news of which was quite unexpected and not a little surprising to him. He looked on himself in many respects so unqualified for that business, that he wondered that gentlemen of so good judgment and so well acquainted with him, as he knew some of the trustees were, should think of him for that place.

The reasons that he gave in a letter, written to the board of trustees, were the following:

"I have a constitution in many respects peculiarly unhappy, attended with flaccid solids, rapid, and scarce fluids, and a low tide of spirits; often occasioning a kind of childish weakness and contemptibleness of speech, presence, and demeanor; with a disagreeable dulness and stiffness, much unfitting me for conversation, but more especially for the government of a college. This pooriness of constitution makes me shrink at the thoughts of taking upon me, in the decline of life, such a new and great business, attended with such a multiplicity of cares, and requiring such a degree of activity, alertness and spirit of government; especially as succeeding one so remarkably well qualified in these respects, giving occasion to everyone to remark the wide difference. I am also deficient in some parts of learning, particularly in algebra, and the higher parts of mathematics, and in the Greek classics, my Greek learning having been chiefly in the New Testament."

He determined to ask the advice of a number of gentlemen in the ministry, on whose judgment and friendship he could rely, and to act accordingly, who, upon his and his people's desire, met at Stockbridge, January 4, 1758, and having heard Mr. Edwards' representation of the matter, and what his people had to say by way of objection against his removal, determined it was his duty to accept of the invitation to the presidency of the college.

Accordingly, having had, by the application of the trustees of the college, the consent of the commissioners to resign their mission, he set off from Stockbridge for Princetown in January. He left his family at Stockbridge not to be removed till spring. He had two daughters at Princetown, Mrs. Burr, the widow of the late President Burr, and his eldest daughter (I think it was Lucy) who was not married.

While at Princetown, before his sickness, he preached in the college-hall Sabbath after Sabbath, to the great acceptance of his hearers; but did nothing as President, unless it was to give out some questions in divinity to the senior class to be answered before him.

The History of Berkshire County, published in 1829, contains a sketch of Timothy Edwards, Colonel Burr's uncle, and Rev. Jonathan Edwards, his grandfather.

When Mr. Edwards was preaching in Northampton it was the most considerable town in the Massachusetts Bay Colony outside of Boston.

It was settled in 1653, and was originally called Nonatuck, after a tribe of Indians. It was created a city in 1884. The city seal bears the motto: "Justice, Charity, Education." The population of the town in 1765 was 1285. At the time of the Revolutionary War it had increased to 1790. At the close of the Civil War the population was 7925, which in 1905 had increased to 19,857.

The picture of the Edwards arms is said to have been verified at the Heraldry Office in London. The motto is: *Sola nobilitas virtus*, which may be translated: "Virtue the only nobility"; or, "Virtue alone is excellence."

It will be noticed that the word "*virtus*" or "virtue" is found both upon the Burr and the Edwards coats-of-arms.

A correspondent (14), interested in the present work, supplied a leaf from an old note-book belonging to the Rev. Timothy Edwards containing an allusion to his only son Jonathan, who had lost a jack-knife given to him by his father.

Miss Little said, in her letter:

"The authenticity of the leaf seems to be undoubted, both from internal evidence and because it belonged to my grandmother, who was a granddaughter of Timothy Edwards, son of Jonathan."

The following account of his conversion, experiences, and religious exercises was given by himself:

I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart and to lie low before God. And when I asked for humility of God, I cannot bear the



The Edwards Coat of Arms — from "The  
Edwards Memorial."



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thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation in me not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be humbled to the dust. Though that may be a proper expression for them, I always think for myself that I ought to be humbled down below hell. 'Tis an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer to God. I ought to lie infinitely low before God. . . . And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, everywhere, all around me. . . . I had at the same time a very affecting sense how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it that God reigned, and that His will was done.

As indicating his state of mind when in his twentieth year, no better evidence could be given than by the subjoined extracts from his private diary:

*Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1723.* There is no dependence upon myself. It is to no purpose to resolve except we depend on the grace of God, for if it were not for his mere grace, one might be a very good man one day and a very wicked one the next.

*Thursday, Jan. 10.* I think I find myself much more sprightly and healthy, both in body and mind, for my self-denial in eating, drinking, and sleeping.

*Saturday, Jan. 12.* I can challenge no right in myself; I can challenge no right in this understanding, this will, these affections that are in me; neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members: no right to this tongue, these hands, nor feet: no right to these senses, these eyes, these ears, this smell or taste. I have given myself clear away, and have not retained anything as my own. I have been to God this morning and told him that I gave myself *wholly* to him. I have given every power to him; so that for the future I will challenge no right in myself.

*Tuesday, Jan. 15.* It seemed yesterday, the day before, and Saturday that I should always retain the same resolutions to the same height, but alas, how soon I do decay! O, how weak, how infirm,

how unable to do anything am I! What a poor, inconsistent, what a miserable wretch without the assistance of God's spirit.

*Saturday, Feb. 16.* I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel requires.

*Saturday, March 2.* O, how much pleasanter is humility than pride! O, that God would fill me with exceeding great humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all pride!

*Monday morning, April 1.* I think it best not to allow myself to laugh at the faults, follies, and infirmities of others.

*Saturday night, April 13.* I could pray more heartily this night for the forgiveness of my enemies than ever before.

*Thursday, May 2.* I think it a very good way to examine dreams every morning when I wake, what are the nature, circumstances, principles, and ends of my imaginary actions and passions in them, to discern what are my chief inclinations, etc.

*Wednesday, May 22.* To take special care of these following things: evil speaking, fretting, eating, drinking, and sleeping, speaking simple verity, joining in prayer, flightiness in secret prayer, listlessness and negligence, and thoughts that cherish sin.

*Monday, July 22.* I see there is danger of my being drawn into transgression by the power of such temptations as a fear of seeming uncivil, and of offending friends. Watch against it.

*Wednesday, July 31.* Never in the least to seek to hear sarcastical relations of others faults. Never to give credit to anything said of others, except there is very plain reason for it; nor to behave disrespect the otherwise for it.

*Monday, Sept. 2.* There is much folly, when I am quite sure in the right, and others are positive in contradicting me, to enter into a vehement or long debate upon it.

On Friday, January 10, 1724, he made a number of notes in shorthand, adding after them these words from Proverbs xii. 23: "A prudent man concealeth knowledge."

*Saturday night, June 6.* This week has been a remarkable week with me with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares, and distraction of mind; being the week I came hither to New Haven, in order to enter upon the office as Tutor of the College.

## HER GREAT-GRANDFATHER 33

I have now abundant reason to be convinced of the troublesomeness and vexation of the world, and that it never will be another kind of world.

*Tuesday, Sept. 2.* By a sparingness in diet, and eating as much as may be what is light and easy of digestion. I shall doubtless be able to think clearer, and shall gain time. 1st, By lengthening out my life. 2dly, Shall need less time for digestion after meals. 3dly, Shall be able to study closer without wrong to my health. 4thly, Shall need less time to sleep. 5thly, Shall seldomer be troubled with the head-ach.

In the volume from which the selection has been made of entries in his private diary, the following reflections appear in connection with the extracts therefrom (9):

The foregoing extracts were wrote by Mr. Edwards in the twentieth and twenty-first years of his age, as appears by the dates. This being kept in mind, the judicious reader will make proper allowance for some things which may appear a little juvenile, or like a young Christian as to the matter or manner of expression: which would not have been found had it not have been done in early life. . . . For here are not only the most convincing evidences of sincerity and thorough religion, of his engaging in a life devoted to God in good earnest, so as to make religion his only business; but through his great attention to this matter, he appears to have the judgment and experience of grey hairs.

The introduction, or preamble, to the seventy resolutions which Mr. Edwards subscribed to as his rule of life, reads as follows:

Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do humbly intreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake.

From the list, the following selections are made, including those not entirely religious in their character, but more in the nature of general rules for leading a good life:



1. Resolved that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory, and my own good, profit, and pleasure, in the whole of my duration, without any consideration of the time, whether now or never so many myriads of ages hence. Resolved to do whatever I think to be my duty, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general. Resolved to do this whatever difficulties I meet with, how many and how great soever.

5. Resolved never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can.

6. Resolved to live with all my might while I do live.

7. Resolved never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

13. Resolved to be endeavoring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.

20. Resolved to maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.

34. Resolved, In narrations never to speak anything but the pure and simple verity.

41. Resolved to ask myself at the end of every day, week, month, and year, wherein I could possibly in any respect have done better.

52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live if they were to live their lives over again. Resolved that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age.

67. Resolved after afflictions to inquire what I am the better for them, what good I have got by them, and what I might have got by them.

The numbers prefixed to the Resolutions previously given correspond with those used in Mr. Edwards' original manuscript.

When a young man so methodically blocks out his rule of life, it is most interesting to learn how closely he adhered to it in after years. Those who knew him bear testimony that during his life he obeyed his self-made rules — in fact, as he grew older, and became the father of a large family, he made others; all, however, in consonance with those of his youth.

Mr. Edwards made a secret of his private devotion, and therefore it cannot be particularly known; though there is much evidence that he was punctual, constant, and frequent in secret prayer, and often kept days of fasting and prayer in secret, and set apart a time for serious devout meditations on spiritual and eternal things, as part of his religious exercise in secret.

He was very careful and abstemious in eating and drinking, as doubtless it was necessary so great a student and a person of so delicate and tender a bodily make as he was, should be, in order to be comfortable and useful. When he had, by careful observation, found what kind and what quantity of diet best suited his constitution and rendered him most fit to pursue his work, he was very strict and exact in complying with it; and in this respect lived by rule; and herein he constantly practised great self-denial, which he also did in his constant early rising, in order to redeem time for his study. He used himself to rise by four, or between four and five in the morning.

He commonly spent thirteen hours every day in his study. His most usual diversion, in summer, was riding on horseback and walking. He would commonly, unless diverted by company, ride two or three miles after dinner to some lonely grove, where he would dismount and walk a while, at which time he usually carried his pen and ink with him to note any thought that should be suggested which he chose to retain and pursue, as what promised some light on any important subject. In the winter he was wont almost daily to take an axe and chop wood moderately for the space of half an hour or more.

He read all the books, especially books of divinity, that he could come at, from which he could hope to get any help in his pursuit of knowledge. And in this he confined not himself to authors of any particular sect or denomination; yea, he took much pains to come at the books of the most noted writers, who advance a scheme of divinity most contrary to his own principles.

He took his religious principles from the Bible and not from any human system or body of divinity. Though his principles were Calvinistic, yet he called no man father. He thought and judged for himself and was truly very much of an original.

He was thought by some who had but a slight acquaintance with him to be stiff and unsociable; but this was owing to want of better acquaintance. He was not a man of many words indeed, and was

somewhat reserved among strangers, and those on whose candour and friendship he did not know he could rely.

He possessed but a comparatively small stock of animal life: his animal spirits were low, and he had not strength of lungs to spare that would be necessary in order to make him what would be called an affable, facetious gentleman in all companies.

He was not forward to enter into any dispute among strangers, and in companies where were persons of different sentiments; as he was sensible that such disputes are generally unprofitable, and often sinful, and of bad consequence, and he thought he could dispute to the best advantage with his pen in his hand.

The imputation that he was stiff and unsociable was groundless, as his known and tried friends best knew. They had always found him easy of access, kind and condescending; and though not talkative, yet affable and free. Among such whose candour and friendship he had experienced, he threw off the reserve and was most open and free; quite patient of contradiction, while the utmost opposition was made to his sentiments that could be by plausible arguments or objections.

As he rose very early himself, he was wont to have his family up in season in the morning, after which, before the family entered on the business of the day, he attended on family prayers, when a chapter in the Bible was read, commonly by candle-light in the winter, upon which he asked his children questions, according to their age and capacity; and took occasion to explain some passages in it, or enforce any duty recommended, as he thought most proper.

He was careful and thorough in the government of his children; and as a consequence of this, they revered, esteemed and loved him. He took special care to begin his government of them in season. When they first discovered any considerable degree of will and stubbornness, he would attend to them till he had thoroughly subdued them and brought them to submit. . . . He took much pains to instruct them in the principles of religion; in which he made use of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism; not merely by taking care that they learned it by heart, but by leading them into an understanding of the doctrines therein taught, by asking them questions on each answer, and explaining it to them. His usual time to attend to this was on the evening before the Sabbath, and, as he believed that the Sabbath or holy time began at sunset the evening before the day, he

I lent to Mr. Lyman 1 vol  
 of his diary. <sup>returned a copy of the journal</sup>  
 lent to Mr. Williams of Andover  
 Taylor on original sin. <sup>his absence he</sup>  
 Afterward Mr. Parsons took it & then  
 brought with him some for his wife  
 & children. That he loves it, & it  
 the last by his leaving it at school or  
 otherwise. Because his conscience &  
 thoughtfulness he shall pay for it one  
 of his own sermons or if only the  
 penmanship he shall take of the book  
 & send him a thing for that  
 money. He shall pay for that

A Leaf from the Note-book of Rev. Jonathan Edwards.



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ordered his family to finish all their special business by that time, or before, when they were all called together and a Psalm was sung and prayer attended, as an introduction to the sanctifying the Sabbath.

He was a great enemy to young people's unseasonable company-keeping and frolics, as he looked upon it as a great means of corrupting and ruining youth. And he thought the excuse many parents make for tolerating their children in it (*vis.* that it is the custom and other children practise it, which renders it difficult and even impossible to restrain theirs) was insufficient and frivolous, and manifested a great degree of stupidity, on supposition the practice was hurtful and pernicious to their souls. . . . He allowed not his children to be from home after nine o'clock at night, when they went abroad to see their friends and companions; neither were they allowed to sit up much after that time in his own house when any came to make a visit. If any gentleman desired acquaintance with his daughters, after handsomely introducing himself by properly consulting the parents, he was allowed all proper opportunity for it, and a room and fire if needed; but must not intrude on the proper hours of rest and sleep, nor the religion and order of the family.

He had a strict and inviolable regard to justice in all his dealings with his neighbors, and was very careful to provide for things honest in the sight of all men; so that scarcely a man had any dealings with him that was not conscious of his uprightness. He appeared to have a sacred regard to truth in his words, both in promises and narrations, agreeable to the Resolutions.

He was cautious in choosing his intimate friends and therefore had not many that might properly be called such; but to them he showed himself friendly in a peculiar manner. He was indeed a faithful friend and able above most others to keep a secret.

His conversation with his friends was always savory and profitable. In this he was remarkable and almost singular. He was not wont to spend his time with them in scandal, evil-speaking, and back-biting, or in foolish jesting, idle chat and telling stories.

His great benevolence to mankind discovered itself, among other ways, by the uncommon regard he showed to liberality and charity to the poor and distressed. He often declared it to be his opinion that professed Christians in these days are greatly deficient in this duty, and much more so than in most other parts of external Christianity. . . . It was his opinion that every particular church ought, by fre-

quent and liberal contributions, to maintain a public stock, that might be ready for the poor and necessitous members of that church.

Smallpox had become very common in the country and was then at Princetown and likely to spread, and, as Mr. Edwards had never had it, and inoculation was then practised with great success in those parts, he proposed to be inoculated, if the physicians would advise it and the corporation would give their consent.

Accordingly, by the advice of the physician and the consent of the corporation, he was inoculated February 13. He had it favorably and it was thought all danger was over; but a secondary fever set in, and by reason of a number of pustles (pustules) in his throat, the obstruction was such that the medicines necessary to staunch the fever could not be administered. It therefore raged until it put an end to his life, on the 22nd of March, 1738, in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

Concerning the inoculation of President Edwards and his daughter, Professor Wilder writes (15):

The cases of Jonathan Edwards and Mrs. Burr were signally illustrative of the danger often incurred from blind, unthinking submission to physicians' fads. There was no good cause in either case for having small-pox. There were several cases in the town, and so healthy persons, under representation that the disease artificially introduced would be less dangerous than in another form, were often inoculated with small-pox virus. President Edwards and his daughter were so inoculated, and died in consequence. . . . Pus is always poisonous to the blood; and in Montreal at the epidemic it was observed by Professor Coderie that patients who were vaccinated developed small-pox soon afterward, seemingly as a consequence of the operation. I regard compulsion as rape.

Two memorials which are monumental if not exactly monuments have been erected to commemorate his name (16):

In 1833, 75 years after his death, a memorial church, named the Edwards Church, was founded in Northampton to perpetuate his name and to continue the work of his life. It is still a flourishing in-

situation, one of the most prosperous religious societies in the vicinity, and has a membership of 480, with a Sunday School of about 400.

On June 22, 1900, just 150 years from the date of Edwards' dismissal from the First Church in Northampton, another memorial was unveiled within its walls. It was authorized by the church and paid for by public subscription. It consists of a bronze tablet, set in a massive frame of green-stained oak, and contains a two-thirds length relief figure of Edwards, life-size or larger, in his favorite attitude while preaching. On the frame beneath is this inscription:

In memory of  
JONATHAN EDWARDS  
Minister of Northampton  
From February 15, 1727, to June  
22, 1750.

The Law of Truth was in his  
mouth, and unrighteousness was  
not found in his lips. He walked  
with me in peace and uprightness  
and did turn many away from in-  
iquity. — Malachi ii. 6.

There are other memorials of lesser character, and various mementoes of Edwards and his family are treasured in many places. Among these is an Edwards memorial window in Yale College Chapel. A desk used by the Rev. Jonathan Edwards is now in possession of the Yale Divinity School.

In a volume published in Edinburgh in 1799 (17) eighteen of the sermons delivered by the Rev. Mr. Edwards are given in full.

The subject of the first sermon was: Jesus Christ Gloriously Exalted above all Evil in the Work of Redemption.

The second and third sermons relate to Joseph's Great Temptation and his Gracious Deliverance.

Sermons 4, 5, and 6, Man's Natural Blindness.

Sermons 7, 8, 9, and 10, Men Naturally God's Enemies.



Sermons 11 to 16, The Wisdom of God as Displayed in the Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, far Superior to the Wisdom of the Angels.

Sermons 17 and 18, The True Christian's Life, a Journey Towards Heaven.

In the sermon devoted to "Joseph's Great Temptation and his Gracious Deliverance," Mr. Edwards objected strongly to dancing. He said:

A custom that I desire may be examined by the fore-mentioned rules, is that of young people of both sexes getting together in the night, in those companies for mirth and jollity that they call frolics, so spending their time together till late in the night in their jollity. I desire our young people to suffer their ears to be open to what I have to say upon this point, as I am the messenger of the Lord of Hosts to them, and not determine that they will not harken until they have heard what I have to say. . . . Have you not found that after you have been to a frolic you have been more backward in the duty of secret prayer? And if you have not wholly neglected it, have you not found that you have been abundantly more flighty, and ready to turn it off in any manner, and glad to have done with it? And more backward to reading and serious meditation, and such things? And that your mind has been exceedingly diverted from religion, and that for some time?

Again, a black mark seems to be set on such in Scripture, as "Ye are all children of the light and the children of the day: we are not of the night nor of the darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunk are drunken in the night."

Many of you that have lately set up this practice of frolicing and jollity, profess to be children of the light and of the day, and not to be the children of darkness. Therefore, walk in the day, and do not those works of darkness that are commonly done at unseasonable hours of the night.

But it is objected that the wise man allows of this practice when he says, in Ecclesiastics iii. 4, There is a time to mourn and a time to dance.

This is nothing to the purpose, for the utmost that any can pretend that it proves is denying it to be lawful, and allowing it may be used

under some circumstances. But not at all that dancing and other things used by our young people in their frolics are lawful in those circumstances, any more than what is said in the same chapter — There is a time to kill, proves that it is lawful for a man to commit murder.

To deny that dancing, under any circumstances whatever, was lawful, would be absurd, for there was a religious dancing in the Jewish Church that was a way of expressing their spiritual mirth. So David danced before the Lord, and he calls upon others to praise God in the dance. But all this makes nothing to the present purpose; to prove that this particular custom, that we have been speaking of among our young people, is not of a bad tendency, and besides, when the wise man says there is a time to dance, that does not prove that the dead of night is the time for it. That same wise man does not justify carnal mirth, but condemns it: I said of laughter, it is mad; and of mirth, what doth it?

I desire heads of families, if they have any government over their children, or any command of their own houses, would not tolerate their children in such practices, nor suffer such conventions in their homes.

The title of Sermon 18 in the Edinburgh volume is: "This Life Ought to be Spent by Us so as to be only a Journey Towards Heaven."

Mr. Edwards said:

This doctrine may teach us moderation in our mourning for the loss of such dear friends who, while they lived, improved their lives to right purposes.

If they lived a holy life, then their lives were a journey towards Heaven, and why should we be immoderate in mourning when they are got to their journey's end? Death to them, though it appears to us with a frightful aspect, is a great blessing. Their end is happy and better than their beginning. "The day of their death is better to them than the day of their birth." While they lived they desired Heaven and chose it above this world, or any of the enjoyments of it. They earnestly sought and longed for Heaven, and why should we grieve that they have obtained it? Now they have got to Heaven. They have got home. They never were at home before. They have got to their Father's house. They find more comfort a thousand times, now that they have got home, than they did in their journey. While

they were on their journey they underwent much labour and toil. It was a wilderness that they passed through, a difficult road. There were abundance of difficulties in the way; mountains and rough places. It was a laborious, fatiguing thing to travel the road. They were forced to lay out themselves to get along, and had many wearisome days and nights. But now they have got through; they have got to the place they sought; they are got home; got to their everlasting rest. They need to travel no more; nor labour any more; nor endure any more toil and difficulty, but enjoy perfect rest and peace, and will enjoy them forever. "And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." They do not mourn that they are got home, but greatly rejoice. They look back upon the difficulties, and sorrows, and dangers of life, rejoicing that they have got through them all . . . It is true we shall see them no more while here in this world, yet we ought not immoderately to mourn for that; though it used to be pleasant to us to see them, and though their company was sweet; for we should consider ourselves as on a journey too; we should be travelling towards the same place that they are gone to. And why should we break our hearts with that that they have got there before us, when we are following after them as fast as we can, and hope, as soon as we get to our journey's end, to be with them again; to be with them in better circumstances than ever we were with them while here? A degree of mourning for near relations when departed is not inconsistent with Christianity, but very agreeable to it, for as long as we are flesh and blood, no other can be expected than that we shall have animal propensities and affections. But we have not just reason to be overborne and sunk in spirits when the death of near friends is attended with these circumstances. We should be glad they are got to Heaven; our mourning should be mingled with joy.

In conclusion, the reverend gentleman's words were:

Let it be considered that if our lives be not a journey towards Heaven, they will be a journey to Hell. We cannot continue here always, but we must go somewhere else. All mankind, after they have been in this world a little while, go out of it, and there are but two places that

they go to; the two great receptacles of all that depart out of this world; the one is Heaven, whither a few, a small number in comparison, travel. The way that leads hither is but thinly occupied with travellers. And the other is Hell, whither the bulk of mankind do throng. And one or the other of these must be our journey's end; the issue of our course in this world.

Edwards believed in total depravity; not only of the adult, but of the child. In one of his sermons he said: "As innocent as children seem to be to us, yet if they are out of Christ they are not so in God's sight, but are young vipers, and are infinitely more hateful than vipers, and are in a most miserable condition, as well as grown persons. Will those children . . . that lived and died insensible of their misery, until they feel it in hell, ever thank parents for not letting them know what they were in danger of?"

An editorial written in 1906 (18) forcibly presents the proper rule of judgment in considering past events and the lives of those who have long lain in their graves. The admirers of Edwards have, as a rule, been the most merciless critics of his grandson. They would have the world judge Edwards by the thought of his time, and his grandson by the ideas of the present.

The verdict of the day may be that the four generations of the Mather family represented better than any other the early type of militant Christianity whose rejection from England for nonconformity did not prevent them from enforcing conformity with the ideas in the Colonies, even to the extent of tyranny.

The Mathers were undoubtedly bigoted in religion, superstitious in belief, and cruel in the treatment of other sects, but they were the type of their time and actuated by what they believed was a worthy and religious motive.

A noted historian has written (19):

In the mind of Jonathan Edwards there was a vein of mysticism as unmistakable as that in the mind of William Penn. Such mysticism may be found in minds of medium capacity, but in minds of the highest type I believe it is rarely absent. A mind which has plunged deeply into the secrets of Nature without exhibiting such a vein of mysticism is, I believe, a mind sterilized and cut off in one direction from access to the truth. Along with Edwards' abstruse reasoning there was a spiritual consciousness as deep as that of Spinoza or Novalis. From his mystic point of view, the change whereby a worldly, unregenerate man or woman became fitted for divine life was a conversion of the soul, an alteration of its innermost purposes, a change of heart from evil to goodness. Perhaps this way of conceiving the case was not new with Edwards. From the earliest ages of Christianity a turning of the soul from the things of this world to Christ has been the essential, but the importance of what has since come to be known as conversion, or change of heart, assumed dimensions never known before.

Jonathan Edwards' theology is rejected at the present day even by the clergymen. Aaron Burr rejected it when a youth, his action showing unmistakably that he was more than a century ahead of his times. And although the clergy do not now believe as Edwards did, many of them still blame Aaron Burr for forsaking the faith of his fathers, and consider him an infidel. He was not. On many occasions he expressed his belief in God, but it was not the fear-inspiring, revengeful God pictured by his grandfather.

The following, illustrative of his manner of preaching, is taken from a volume of biographical sketches (20):

His mother was a woman of more than ordinary intelligence, having a profound knowledge of Scripture and the theology of the times. From her, even more than from his father, Jonathan Edwards inherited

his peculiar talents. He was a precocious boy, taking deep interest in his studies and was a keen observer of nature. At thirteen he entered Yale College, which had then been in existence only fifteen years.

There is just a suspicion of his having indulged, to some extent, in the usual follies of students, there being some accounts of a "disturbance" during his connection with the college. If such be a fact, it would seem to be the only break in the strict regularity of his life. He graduated with high honors at seventeen. He was, from earliest childhood, inspired with a deep reverence for religion, although it presented itself to him in its most austere form. . . .

With the growth of the country, public opinion was undergoing a change with regard to certain theological dogmas. Among those doctrines which people were beginning to call in question were the Trinity, endless punishment, the atonement and justification by faith. These Edwards considered it his duty to defend to the utmost of his ability, and to that end preached sermons and wrote and published books which still continue to be held in high esteem by those who are in sympathy with his teachings. Much of his preaching was stern and monitory, and calculated to work upon the fears of his auditors. One sermon of this nature has become famous. It was preached at Enfield, Conn., in July, 1741. The congregation became convulsed with agony to such an extent that he was obliged to pause in his discourse and request them to be quiet, so that he might be heard.

In the Edinburgh volume (17) is found a most interesting description of his method of composition and delivery of his sermons.

Mr. Edwards had the most universal character of a good preacher of almost any minister in this age. There were but few that heard him who did not call him a good preacher, however they might dislike his religious principles, and be much offended by the same truths when delivered by others; and most admired him above all that ever they heard. His eminency as a preacher seems to be owing to the following things:

*First.* The great pains he took in composing his sermons, especially in the first part of his life. He wrote most of his sermons all out for nearly twenty years after he first began to preach; though he did not wholly confine himself to his notes in delivering them.

*Secondly.* His great acquaintance with divinity, his study and knowledge of the Bible; his extensive and universal knowledge, and great clearness of thought, enabled him to handle every subject with great judgment and propriety, and to bring out of his treasury things new and old. Every subject he handled was instructive, plain, entertaining, and profitable, which was much owing to his being master of the subject, and his great skill to treat it in a most natural, easy, and profitable manner.

*Thirdly.* His excellency as a preacher was very much the effect of his great acquaintance with his own heart, his own inward sense, and high relish of divine truths, and the high exercise of true experimental religion. This gave him great insight into human nature; he knew what was in man, both the saint and the sinner. No description of his sermons will give the reader the idea of them, which they had who sat under his preaching or have even read some of his discourses in print. There are a great many now in manuscript which are probably as worthy the view of the public as most that have been published in this country.

His appearance at the desk was with a good grace, and his delivery easy, natural, and solemn. He had not a strong, loud voice; but appeared with such gravity and solemnity, and spake with such distinctness, clearness, and precision; his words were so full of ideas, set in such a plain and striking light, that few speakers have been so able to command the attention of an audience as he. His words often discovered a great degree of inward fervour, without much noise or external emotion, and fell with great weight on the minds of his hearers. He made but little motion of his head or hands in the desk. . . . In the latter part of his life he was inclined to think that it would have been better if he had never accustomed himself to use his notes at all. . . . He would have the young preacher write all his sermons, or at least most of them, out at large, and instead of reading them to his hearers, take pains to commit them to memory.

His prayers were indeed *extempore*. He was the farthest from any appearance of a form as to his words and manner of expression as almost any man. . . . He was not wont, in ordinary cases, to be long in his prayers; an error he observed was often hurtful to public and social prayer, as it tends rather to damp than promote true devotion.

He kept himself quite free from worldly cares. He left the partic-

ular oversight and direction of the temporal concerns of his family almost entirely to Mrs. Edwards; who was better able than most of her sex to take the whole care of them on her hands. He was less acquainted with most of his temporal affairs than many of his neighbors, and seldom knew when and by whom his forage for winter was gathered in, or how many milk kine he had, whence his table was furnished, etc.

He did not make it his custom to visit his people in their own houses, unless he was sent for by the sick, or he heard that they were under some special affliction. Instead of visiting from house to house, he used to preach frequently at private meetings in particular neighborhoods, and often call the young people and children to his own house, when he used to pray with them and treat with them in a manner suited to their years and circumstances. And he catechised the children in public every Sabbath in the summer.

He did not neglect visiting his people from house to house, because he did not look upon it, in ordinary cases, to be one part of the work of the gospel minister. He was not able to enter into a free conversation with every person he met with, and in an easy manner turn it to what topic he pleased, without the help of others, and, as it may be, against their inclination. He therefore found that his visits of this kind must be in a great degree unprofitable.

The effect of the Rev. Mr. Edwards' preaching upon his hearers is well described by a correspondent of the Paterson, N. J., Call:

The mention of Jonathan Edwards calls up, oh, so many interesting memories! My dear friend Moses Berry, long since departed this life — what tremendous effect on his quiet, uneventful life the writings of Jonathan Edwards had! Edwards' "On the Freedom of the Will" made my poor friend's life miserable. Blessed with good health, with good worldly prospects, and with a good home, my poor friend worried terribly over the question as to whether or not he was one of the "elect." He was a Calvinist of Calvinists — a Particular Baptist. Misery, they say, loves company, and it was perhaps on this account that my friend never felt satisfied until he had persuaded others to read Edwards' "On the Freedom of the Will." . . .

Yes, it was the logic of Edwards that poor Moses Berry suffered



from. In spite of his logic and his austere theology, there seems something grand about the man. One feels inclined to learn more of him. . . . Reverting again to my old friend Berry and his Particular Baptist pastor, there is just one item to add. When Moody and Sankey were carrying on their great work of evangelization in Manchester, this particular divine found it incumbent on him to climb the watch tower of Zion and sound an alarm. He even went so far as to denounce the evangelists, calling them "Arminian dogs."

Joseph Hawley, 2d, was for many years selectman and town clerk of Northampton. He was a farmer, trader, and owned a saw-mill. He married Rebekah Stoddard, daughter of Rev. Solomon Stoddard, and thus became uncle of Rev. Jonathan Edwards. In the great religious revival of 1735 he became so much affected by Edwards' preaching that he was unable to convince himself that he had received a sufficient call to salvation and he committed suicide.

Joseph Hawley, 3d, inherited from his father a strong predisposition to melancholy. He was one of the bitterest opponents of his cousin, Jonathan Edwards, and it is thought he was unable to forget the cause of his father's suicide.

The quotation which follows (21) refers to an episode in Mr. Edwards' life which would require too much space for consideration here, but which will be treated in full in a succeeding volume which will be entitled, "Social Life during the Revolution and the Early Days of the Republic."

In 1744 a great disturbance took place in his parish, through his indiscreet interference in the affairs and conduct of the younger portion of his flock, and which resulted in his dismissal in 1750. A spirit of bitterness, wholly unaccountable, infused itself throughout his congregation. From being worshipped as few ministers have ever been,

even in those palmy days of the ministry, he was treated with most cutting contumely, and sent forth, with a large family on his hands, in poverty and disgrace. Under all this unmerited odium, when calumny did its worst to destroy his peace and blacken his fame, he manifested the truly Christian spirit and struck not back again.

The first of his published works was a sermon preached at New Haven, September 10, 1741, on "The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God."

In the year 1742 he published a book in five parts, entitled "Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England and the Way in which it Ought to be Acknowledged and Promoted."

In the year 1746 he published a treatise on "The Religious Affections."

"The Life of the Rev. Mr. David Brainerd, with Reflections and Observations thereon," was published in the year 1749.

Later appeared his treatise on "Justification," and his two last books on "The Freedom of the Will" and "Original Sin."

He thought it of importance that ministers should be very critical in examining candidates for the ministry with respect to their principles, as well as their religious dispositions and morals, and on this account he met with considerable difficulty and opposition in some instances. His opinion was that an erroneous or unfaithful minister was likely to do more hurt than good to the church of Christ; and therefore he could not have any hand in introducing a man into the ministry unless he appeared sound in the faith, and manifested to a judgment of charity a disposition to be faithful.

On September 6, 1870, a meeting of the Edwards family was held at Stockbridge, Mass. The Hon. Jos. W. Edwards, of Marquette, Michigan, was chosen president, and the Rev. Jonathan E. Woodbridge, of Auburndale, Mass., vice-president. Considering the great number of descendants of Jonathan Edwards, the attendance was not large, but it could, with truth, be called "distinguished." The meeting lasted two days and the literary programme offered was of great excellence. At the opening of the meeting a letter was read from Mrs. Mary E. Whiting, of Binghamton, N. Y. She was ninety years of age at the time of the meeting and was the only living representative of the grandchildren of Jonathan Edwards. Reference was made to the fact that the last resting-place of Mr. Edwards at Princeton, N. J., was marked only by a plain slab. It has been said: "Jonathan Edwards needs no monument," but before the close of the meeting a committee was appointed to solicit funds for one at Stockbridge.

The meeting was opened with a prayer, by Prof. Wm. S. Tyler, D.D., of Amherst College, who married the daughter of Mrs. Whiting, of Binghamton, N. Y. An ode written by E. W. B. Canning, of Stockbridge, was then sung by the choir. An address of welcome on the part of the people of Stockbridge was delivered by Rev. Elias Cornelius Hooker. A commemorative discourse was next given by Rev. Theodore Dwight Woolsey, D.D., LL.D., President of Yale College. A hymn written by Mrs. Sarah Edwards Henshaw, of Ottawa, Ill. (who was not present), was sung. The Hon.



Monument to the Rev. Jonathan Edwards at Stock-  
bridge, Mass.



J. Z. Goodrich, chairman of the committee of entertainment, then invited the company to partake of refreshments, and a blessing was asked by the Rev. Dr. Prime, of New York. This closed the morning session.

The afternoon session was opened by an address on "The Early Life of Jonathan Edwards," by the Rev. I. N. Tarbox, D.D., of Boston, and a native of East Windsor. "Edwards as a Thinker and Preacher" was the subject chosen by Prof. Edwards A. Park, of Andover Seminary. The Rev. John Todd, of Pittsfield, Mass., took as his subject "The Ministry of Edwards at Northampton." "Edwards at Southbridge" was the title of a discourse by Rev. Mark Hopkins, D.D., LL.D., President of Williams College, a native of Stockbridge, and a descendant of Mr. John Sargeant, who initiated the mission to the Indians at Stockbridge, and who was followed in the work by the Rev. Mr. Edwards. It was intended that the subject "Edwards at Princeton" should be taken by Dr. James McCosh, President of the College of New Jersey (Princeton), but he was unable to attend on account of the opening of the college, and the subject was allotted to S. Irenæus Prime, D.D., editor of the New York Observer.

The morning session, September 7, was opened by a hymn by Dr. Dwight, followed by a prayer by E. W. Hooker. Next in order was an address by Rev. Geo. Woodbridge, D.D., rector of the Monumental Church, Richmond, Va., and a descendant of Jonathan Edwards. Remarks were then made by Wm. W. Edwards, of Brooklyn, N. Y.,

Joseph Effingham Woodbridge, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Prof. Frank D. Clark, of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, New York City. Then followed a poem by Mrs. Mary B. Clarke, of Newbern, N. C., and remarks by Hon. Jonathan Edwards, of New Haven, Conn., concerning the pictures of Rev. Jonathan Edwards and his wife, Sarah Pierpont. The next feature of the programme was a memorial poem by Mrs. Sarah Edwards Tyler Henshaw, of Ottawa, Ill., entitled "Our Roll of Honor," from which the two stanzas which follow are quoted:

## XI

In making up our roll of mark and fame,  
We pause at one illustrious, clouded name,  
Then write it with a sigh. Oh, cease to slur,  
Harsh critic, our proud, brilliant, AARON BURR!  
In Calvinism stern a keen adept —  
Theology which he could ne'er accept, —  
Like Noah's dove which from the ark arose,  
He found no other shelter or repose.  
By light of lurid fires yet scarcely dim,  
How looks the Justice meted out to him?  
What was the treason of a dreamer's brain  
To that which hath its tens of thousands slain?  
With that which would acquire a foreign land  
To that against its own which raised its hand?  
And wherefore o'er Burr's memory ceaseless rave,  
While DAVIS goes unchallenged to his grave?

## XII

For Burr, then, and his Theodosia, rise  
From us, at least, regrets and sorrowing sighs.  
The child of Error, but of Genius too,  
We, we, at least, hold not his faults to view:

*We only know he was a child of prayer;  
We only feel of none should we despair;  
We only think how, through long, anxious years,  
Our pious Edwardes with hopes and fears  
For his salvation wrestled, prayed, and wept,  
Concerts of prayer and frequent vigils kept.  
Now lay a wreath upon his lowly sod,  
And leave the sleeper with his father's God.*

The poem contained an invocation to the portrait of Sarah Pierpont Edwards, which, with the portrait of her husband, the Rev. Jonathan, was hung upon the walls of the church where the meeting was held. One stanza is subjoined:

## TO THE PORTRAIT OF SARAH PIERPONT

*O lustrous eyes so dark and deep,  
Filled with a shimmering haze!  
O eyes that holy vigils keep!  
Tears into mine unbidden leap  
As I return your gaze.  
Why look on us with mild surprise,  
Ancestress of the beautiful eyes?*

It would seem as though "beautiful eyes" were inherent both in the Edwards and Burr families, for according to the biographers and historians, the Rev. Aaron Burr, who married Esther Edwards, and who was the father of Col. Aaron Burr, had similar eyes. The closing lines of the poem were as follows:

*The Edwards line — may it forever last!  
The Edwards present — may it match the past!  
The Edwards future — may it proudly claim  
A record worthy our ancestral fame!*



A letter from Rev. Wm. B. Sprague, of Flushing, N. Y., was then read. The committee on the erection of a monument to Jonathan Edwards consisted of Hon. Jonathan Edwards, of New Haven, Conn.; Henry Edwards, of Boston, Mass.; Hon. Jos. W. Edwards, of Marquette, Mich.; Eli Whitney, of New Haven, Conn.; Prof. Theodore W. Dwight, LL.D., of New York, N. Y.; W. Dwight Bell, of Philadelphia, Penn.; and the Rev. J. E. Woodbridge, of Auburndale, Mass.

Resolutions conveying the thanks of the family to the citizens of Stockbridge for the entertainment afforded and courtesies extended were read by Hon. Jonathan Edwards, of New Haven, and adopted. Among the members of the family present was Mr. Jonathan Edwards, of Forest City, Nebraska. He had not been East since he had attended the funeral of his grandfather, Timothy Edwards, in 1813 — fifty-nine years previous. Addresses then followed by Rev. H. M. Field, D.D., of Stockbridge, the Rev. Mr. Eggleston, formerly a pastor in that town, and the Rev. Dr. Gale, of Lee. A poem by Geo. T. Dole, of Stockbridge, which contained the following allusion to Colonel Aaron Burr, was then read:

But peradventure (pardon us) of puff  
Your ears, your hearts, already have enough.  
Remember, then, your glory bright to blur,  
In your emblazoned 'scutcheon sticks *one Burr*.  
In earthly waters, purest and most clear,  
Some turbid spots will now and then appear;  
And *every* stream from *mountain-height* that flows  
Sinks *far* below the level whence it rose.

An address by David Dudley Field, LL.D., and a



Fig. 2-6. Revolving Desk used in the Regulation of  
Edwards.



benediction by Prof. Edwards A. Park brought the meeting to a close.

The preceding account of the meeting at Stockbridge, Mass., is condensed from "The Edwards Memorial" (10).

On Monday, October 5, 1903, services in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of the Rev. Jonathan Edwards were held at the First Congregational Church, South Windsor, Conn. The exercises included an address of welcome by the Rev. C. A. Jaquith, the pastor. Yale University was represented by Prof. Lewis O. Brastow, and Rev. Dr. Henry T. Rose, of Northampton. Prof. Theodore S. Woolsey, LL.D., of the Yale faculty, delivered an address on "The Descendants of Jonathan Edwards." An address was also delivered by the Rev. Dr. E. A. Dunning, of Boston, editor of the *Congregationalist*. A visit was made to the birthplace of the Rev. Jonathan Edwards and to that of his father, the Rev. Timothy Edwards.

The evening before, addresses were made by Prof. H. M. Gardiner, of Smith College, Rev. Dr. John Coleman Adams, of the Church of the Redeemer, Rev. Dr. Joseph H. Twichell, and Rev. Dr. George M. Stone, pastor of the Asylum Avenue Baptist Church, and a historical address by Judge John A. Stoughton, all of Hartford. Dr. Stone, in his address, made some quotations from Whittier's poem on Edwards, one stanza of which is given below:

"In the church of the wilderness Edwards wrought,  
Shaping his creed at the forge of thought;  
And with Thor's own hammer welded and bent

The iron links of his argument,  
Which strove to grasp in its mighty span  
The purpose of God and the fate of man!  
Yet faithful still, in his daily round,  
To the weak, and the poor, and sin-sick found,  
The schoolman's lore and the casuist's art,  
Drew warmth and light from his fervent heart."

The allusions to the visits to the weak and the poor may be attributed to what is called the poet's license. As has been previously stated, the Rev. Mr. Edwards did not follow the practice of visiting his parishioners except on what he considered very important occasions.

The "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" wrote about Mr. Edwards, in his conversational way (22):

Of all the scholars and philosophers that America had produced before the beginning of the present century, two only had established a considerable and permanent reputation in the world of European thought -- Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards. No two individuals could well differ more in temperament, character, beliefs, and mode of life than did these two men, representing respectively intellect, practical and abstract.

Edwards would have called Franklin an infidel and turned him over to the uncovenanted mercies, if, indeed, such were admitted in his programme of divine administration. Franklin would have called Edwards a fanatic, and tried the effect of Poor Richard's common sense on the major premises of his remorseless syllogisms.

We are proud of the great Boston-born philosopher, who snatched the thunder-bolt from Heaven with one hand, and the scepter from tyranny with the other. So, also, are we proud of the great New England Divine, of whom it might be said quite as truly: "*Eripuit coelo fulmen.*" (He snatched the lightning from the Heavens.)

The feeling which naturally arises when contemplating the character of Jonathan Edwards is that of deep reverence for a man who seems to have been anointed from his birth, who lived a life pure, laborious, self-denying, occupied with the highest themes and busy in



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the highest kind of labor — such a life as in another church might have given him a place in the *Acta Sanctorum*. (Register of the saints.) We can in part account for what he was when we remember his natural inherited instincts, his training, his faith, and the conditions by which he was surrounded. His ancestors had fed on sermons so long that he must have been born with scriptural texts lying latent in his embryonic thinking marrow, like the undeveloped picture in the film of collodion.

He was born in the family of a Connecticut minister, in a town where revivals of religion were of remarkable frequency. His mother, it may be suspected, found him in brains, for she was called the brighter of the old couple; and the fact that she did not join the Church until Jonathan was twelve years old implies that she was a woman who was not to be hurried and to become a professor of religion simply because she was the wife of the Rev. Timothy Edwards.

His opinion of the devil is hardly more respectful than that which he entertains of man. "If the devil be exceedingly crafty and subtle," he says, "yet he is one of the greatest fools and blockheads in the world, as the surplus of wicked men are." But for all he was such a fool, he has played a very important part, Edwards thinks, on the great page of the world's history.

From a sermon preached at the Church of the Redeemer, Hartford, Conn., October 4, 1903, the following is taken (23):

Two hundred years ago to-morrow Jonathan Edwards was born at East Windsor. To the average American he is chiefly known to-day as a theologian who presented the harsher side of Calvinism, with more power, and rigor, and relentlessness than any American preacher before or since. And few good men have left a more unpleasant memory than he to his countrymen. But it would seem as if we were sufficiently removed from the spell of his theology to try to gain a dispassionate view of the man, especially those of us who are the most completely emancipated from the fetters of his theology and spell of his logic.

The first things that one learns about him, as he begins to inquire concerning this great name, is that he was a preacher who pictured the torments to which he believed the major part of his fellowmen

were doomed, with awful power and particularity; that he called t children, when unconverted, "little vipers, and worse than vipers he insisted that the saints in glory would rejoice in the suffering their children, parents, brothers, driven into eternal pains, in whi they would "roast" forever; that the natural man is the enemy God, whom he would kill if he could, and tear from his throne. T sum of what the average men hear about Edwards has filled the with aversion for him and his theology.

So it is with some surprise that it is found that the experts in biog raphy and history credit him with rare distinction. . . . The backbo of Edwards' theology is the sovereignty of God; and that is the corne stone of Universalism. "The doctrine of God's sovereignty," wrote, "has often appeared an exceeding pleasant, bright, and swe doctrine to me; and absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe God." That is the very bedrock on which the Universalist build his faith in the salvation of all souls. He believes, as Edwards lov to, in the absolute rule of God in his own creation. But Edwards ma the mistake of enthroning a bad God in Heaven. If Jonath Edwards' God had been a good God, Edwards would have been Universalist. He could not have escaped it. But his deity was exceedingly bad one and was represented as doing things for which I would have damned human beings. It was of Edwards' God th Henry Ward Beecher said in Plymouth pulpit that he was "a monst more hideous than Satan."

Edwards' "Treatise on the Religious Affections" is one of the mo discouraging works ever written for the perusal of the devout. fills the unhappy Christian's mind with so many misgivings as whether he really is saved by the operation of the spirit, that, as D Holmes says: "Many a pious Christian after reading it must ha set himself down as a castaway."

I realize the malign power of this well-meant but mistaken wor from the fact that all my life I have had to overcome people's doub as to whether they were "good enough to join the church." Sin reading this book, I know that I and every modern minister in Americ have had to fight Jonathan Edwards, and try to unclasp his dea hand from the hearts of men and women whom we have tried to brin to an avowal of discipleship in Christ, but who have denied us wit misgivings and scruples born of this teaching of the Northampton divine. . . .



The "Jonathan Edwards Tree" at Northampton, Mass.





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He pushed Calvinism to the limit, and America revolted. He put the religious mind of the land to too much of a strain and it broke under the tension. This system is a ruin to-day, but out of the debris men may quarry great blocks of truth, from which to build a finer, fairer temple to the sovereign, God of Love, whom he worshipped, but whose fulness and beneficence he could not see.

A prominent Boston newspaper said editorially in 1903 (24):

Religious thought has changed greatly since Jonathan Edwards preached the gospel of salvation, and in these days New England's distinguished divine would probably have few followers; nevertheless the severe Calvinistic teaching of Edwards had its part in the liberalizing of popular religious belief. If not the man for the present day, he was indubitably the man for his own time. His was the voice of his contemporaries. His theology was an embodiment of the insistent and persistent belief of the Pilgrim and Puritan. Neither the church nor the people of New England could have been what they are to-day but for men who looked upon religion as a penance, and upon God as a ruler to be placated instead of a Father to love and to trust. If the early ministers had not lifted the people as high as their own thought-level, the people could not easily have been raised to a higher plane by preachers of later date.

Dr. George A. Gordon, of the Old South Church, in his address on the "Significance of Edwards To-day," at the memorial celebration at Northampton in 1900, said that Edwards "as a whole is incredible, impossible. He is nearly as much in the wrong as in the right. He carries his vast treasure in the earthen vessel of radical inconsistency and fundamental error, his anthropology being defective and inconsistent with his exaltation of the God of absolute love. If," he adds, "the plan of salvation includes only a part of mankind, the God of absolute love must be surrendered; if the God of absolute love is at the head of the universe, the plan of salvation inclusive only of a part of the race must be abandoned."

A test of a man's size is the sort of men he is compared with when men come to make their appraisals of him. Reference has already been made to Rabbi Duncan's classing him with Aristotle; as a lover of his wife to be, and a poetic commentator on feminine virtue and loveliness, he has repeatedly been compared with Dante; the flight

and scope of his imagination dealing with things of the spirit world have naturally suggested Milton; his experience of exile from Northampton for conscience's sake recalls Savonarola's fate in Florence. . . .

When it comes to present-day American estimates of Edwards, it is evident that we are still loyal to his name. First there is the poll taken for the Hall of Fame in 1900, when Edwards led the list of American theologians, receiving eighty-two of the ninety-seven electors' votes, Henry Ward Beecher coming next, with sixty-four, and William Ellery Channing with fifty-eight votes.

At the present day, the theology preached by Jonathan Edwards does not commend itself to what may be considered advanced thinkers. The New York Outlook says:

Superlatives are always dangerous, but it is safe to say that New England has produced no greater preacher and no greater theologian than he. But he was less an originator than an interpreter and defender. He borrowed the essential features of his theology from Calvin, as Calvin had borrowed them from Augustine, and Augustine had borrowed them from the Roman law. . . . His system of theology has now only a historical existence. No minister preaches it; no church believes it; no theological seminary teaches it, except with modifications which Edwards would have rejected with indignant disdain.

In the same vein are certain comments made by a Methodist Episcopal paper, Zion's Herald, published in Boston.

He set out to re-assert with utmost vigor the doctrine of divine sovereignty, at a period when this conviction was becoming a subordinate one in the religious mind; he attempted to lay a deeper emphasis upon the absolute, arbitrary, unconditioned will of God, and utterly to demolish and annihilate Arminianism, which he deemed a most pestilential evil wholly abhorrent to all lovers of the doctrines of grace, and likely to ruin the churches. His intention was admirable, and success for the time seemed all that could be desired. But the ages were against him, and in the long run he proved powerless to stem the tide of Arminian aggression. That which he accounted fatal error has,



Tablet to the Rev. Jonathan Edwards in the First  
Congregational Church, Northampton, Mass.



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in its fundamental contention, received the stamp of almost universal approval and been conclusively shown to be the truth of God. His treatise on the Will — his most elaborate and most immediately influential work, that by which he became mainly known — held in its day, and long afterward as absolutely unanswerable, has few now to do it reverence, and very few who wish to be regarded as giving it full acceptance.

Another clergyman of the present day writes as follows (25):

Hell, as hell used to be understood, is no longer preached by the preachers or believed in by the people. The hell with which Jonathan Edwards used to make thousands tremble as often as he went into his pulpit, would, if preached to-day, even by a Jonathan Edwards scarcely prevail to produce a ripple of excitement. . . . The hell of ~~theology~~ never existed except in the theologians' minds, but the hell of Nature is an eternal reality, which no amount of disbelief is able to affect, and from which no one of us can possibly get away.

We no longer believe that we "go to hell"; but it is as certain as anything in Euclid that, as often as is necessary, hell comes to us.

Hell or Heaven is the harvest of a man's sowing, the inevitable fruit of his planting. . . . To venerate the kind and the true is to find yourself in a world beautiful as the things for which you live; while to dedicate yourself to the selfish and the brutal, the dishonorable and the mean, is to rear about yourself the walls of shame and the habitation of ugliness and unrest.

In the year 1906, Theodosia Garrison wrote in (New York) Life:

He trembled in the morning,  
At noon he was afraid,  
And heavy on his heart at night  
The hand of fear was laid.

A presence walked beside him  
Of horror and of fright —  
A shadow in the sunshine,  
A menace in the night.

## THEODOSIA

And this that dogged his childhood,  
This thing of scourge and rod,  
They gave him as a priceless gift,  
And bade him call it God.

They made for him a fear that killed  
The child-joy in his breast;  
They made for him a shape of dread  
And bade him love it best.

Oh Mild, Oh Just, Oh Merciful!  
What then shall be their shame,  
These souls who teach a little child  
To shudder at Thy name!

Poets are said to most acutely sense the higher feelings of mankind.

Why has so much space been given to Jonathan Edwards and his religious precepts? Because the reader must understand the religious situation in the Colonies, when Aaron Burr was a young man, in order to fully comprehend his reasons for objecting *then* to a theology which, as we have seen, is *now* generally rejected by professing and accepted Christians. In religion, as in many other lines of thought, Aaron Burr was in advance of the period in which he lived.

## CHAPTER IV

### MRS. SARAH PIERPONT EDWARDS

**S**ARAH PIERPONT, who became the wife of the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, was the daughter of James Pierpont, the minister at New Haven. Her grandfather was John Pierpont, who settled in Roxbury, Mass. He was the son of Sir John Pierpont of Nottingham, in England. Her father was one of the founders of Yale College, trustee, and professor of moral philosophy. She was also descended from the Rev. Thomas Hooker, known as "the father of Connecticut churches."

Mr. Edwards was desirous of being married at once, but she replied with a refusal to marry until she was seventeen, and when he insisted by declaring that patience was not a virtue, she still adhered to her refusal, and they were not married until July 26, 1727.

She certainly would have received commendation from President Roosevelt, and perhaps have been awarded a medal, for in less than twenty-two years she became the mother of eleven children.

Prof. Louis Albert Banks (11) gives an interesting account of their courtship and family life:

Soon after coming to Northampton, Edwards decided to seek him a wife. While in New Haven, in attendance on Yale College, he had first heard of Sarah Pierpont, who is described as a young woman



of marvelous beauty. When young Edwards was only twenty years old, and this girl thirteen, he wrote a paragraph concerning her, which the famous Dr. Chalmers is said to have greatly admired because of its eloquence.

"They say there is a certain young lady in New Haven who is beloved of that great Being who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything except to meditate on Him; that she expects after a while to be received up where He is, to be raised up out of the world, and caught up into Heaven; being assured that He loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from Him always. There she is to dwell with Him and to be ravished with His love and delight forever. Therefore if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards and cares naught for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do anything wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this great Being. She is of a wonderful calmness, and universal benevolence of mind; especially after this great God has manifested Himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place singing sweetly; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure, and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always convening with her." . . .

Sarah Pierpont Edwards seems to have been worthy of the eloquent description of her lover. The famous George Whitefield, visiting them many years afterwards, and spending several days at Northampton, left his impression of his visit in his diary in the following paragraph:

"On the Sabbath felt wonderful satisfaction at being at the house of Mr. Edwards. He is a son himself and hath also a daughter of Abraham for his wife. A sweeter couple I have not seen. Their children were dressed, not in silks and satins, but plain, as becomes the children of those who in all things ought to be examples of Christian simplicity. She is a woman adorned with a meek and quiet spirit, and talked so feelingly and so solidly on the things of God, and seemed to be such an helpmate to her husband, that she caused me to



Miss Sarah Pierpont, who became the wife of Rev.  
Jonathan Edwards. Photographed  
expressly for this work.



renew those prayers which for some months I have put up to God, that he would send me a daughter of Abraham to be my wife. I find upon many accounts it is my duty to marry. Lord, I desire to have no choice of my own. Thou knowest my circumstances."

Mrs. Edwards' character has been fully and carefully considered in many volumes, and in magazine and newspaper articles. It is possible here to mention only a few of the things in which she is said to have excelled, and to have set an example worthy of the imitation of all. She is said to have become remarkably religious at the age of five years. During her life she was eminent for her piety. Religious conversation was her delight, and she promoted it whenever possible. The friends of true religion, and those who were ready to engage in religious conversation, were her peculiar friends and intimates. She took delight in the religious duties of the closet and highly prized social worship. It was her custom to attend private meetings of religious worship that were kept up at Northampton while Mr. Edwards lived there. She paid proper deference to her husband, and treated him with decency and respect at all times. As he was of a weakly and infirm constitution, and was peculiar and exact in his diet, she spared no pains to conform to his inclinations, and made things agreeable and comfortable for him.

No person of discernment could be conversant with the family without observing the great harmony and mutual love that subsisted between them. She bore her own troubles with patient cheerfulness and good humor.

She was a good economist, managing her house-

hold affairs with discretion. She was very careful that nothing should be wasted or lost. She took almost the whole care of the temporal affairs of the family within doors and without, and in this she was peculiarly suited to Mr. Edwards' disposition, who chose to have no care of worldly business. She had an excellent way of governing her children. She knew how to make them respect and obey her cheerfully. She seldom struck her children a blow, and if any correction was needful, it was not given in a passion. When she had occasion to reprove or rebuke, she would do it in a few words and in a calm and gentle manner. In her directions or reproofs, she addressed herself to the reason of her children. Quarrelling and contention, such as frequently takes place among children, was not known among them. She was sensible in many respects that the chief care of forming children by government and instruction naturally lies on mothers, as they are generally with their children in their most pliable age, when they commonly receive impressions, and their characters are formed for life. As the law of kindness was in her tongue, so her hands were not withheld from beneficence and charity. She was always a friend and patroness of the poor and helpless, and did much in acts of charity as well as in commending it to others on all occasions. She was remarkable for her kindness to her friends, and visitors who came to see Mr. Edwards. She would spare no pains to make them welcome and provide for their comfort and convenience. She made it a rule to speak well of all, so far as she could with truth and justice to herself and others.

She was not wont to dwell with delight on the imperfections or failings of any; and when she heard persons speaking ill of others, she would say what she thought she could with truth and justice in their excuse.

Lucy was the fifth child and fifth daughter of Mr. Edwards. She attended her father in his last sickness. When he became sensible that he could not survive, he called her to him and addressed her in a few words, which were taken down in writing as nearly as could be recollected (17):

"Dear Lucy,

It seems to be the will of God that I must shortly leave you; therefore give my kindest love to my dear wife, and tell her, that the uncommon union which has so long subsisted between us, has been of such a nature, as I trust is spiritual, and therefore will continue for ever: and I hope she shall be supported under so great a trial, and submit cheerfully to the will of God. And as to my children, you are now like to be left fatherless, which I hope will be an inducement to you all to seek a Father who will never fail you. And as to my funeral, I would have it to be like Mr. Burr's; and any additional sum of money that might be expected to be laid out that way, I would have it disposed of to charitable uses."

The Mr. Burr to whom he referred was his son-in-law, President Aaron Burr, of the College of New Jersey. He had ordered on his deathbed that nothing should be expended but what would be agreeable to the dictates of Christian decency, and that the sum that must be expended at a modish funeral, over and above the necessary cost of a decent one, should be given to the poor, out of his estate.

At the present day, appeals are often made through the newspapers that the cost of funerals may be reduced. The author of the work from which the

above quotation is made, in commenting upon the request made by President Burr and President Edwards in regard to their funerals, said, in 1799:

"It is to be wished and hoped that the laudable example of these two presidents, in which they bear their dying testimony against a practice so unchristian, and of such bad tendency so many ways, may have some good effect."

It is evident that some reforms progress very slowly, for the tendency, during the past hundred years, has undoubtedly been to increase the outlay for funeral expenses rather than to decrease them. The prevailing increase in expenditure at the present time comes in the way of more expensive coffins, or caskets, and the long retinue of carriages which follow the deceased to the grave. In the olden days it was the custom to give away a great number of costly mourning scarfs, and there was, as the old chroniclers say, a consumption of a great quantity of spirituous liquors.

President Edwards said but very little during his sickness. Just before his death, some persons who sat in the room expressed deep regret at the great loss to the college and to religion in general. To their surprise, not imagining that he had heard or would ever speak another word, he said: "Trust in God and ye need not fear." These were his last words.

The physician who inoculated and constantly attended him wrote as follows to his wife (17):

"Never did any mortal man more clearly and fully evidence the sincerity of all his professions, by one continued, universal, calm, cheerful resignation and patient submission to the divine will, through every stage of his disease, than he. Not so much as one discontented

expression, nor the least appearance of murmuring through the whole. And never did any person expire with more perfect freedom from pain: not so much as one distorted hair, but in the most proper sense of the words, he really fell asleep."

As the same physician who inoculated President Edwards performed a like service for Mrs. Esther Burr, he is probably the medical gentleman who, after her death, said that he could call her disease by no name but that of a messenger sent suddenly to call her out of the world.

From the old volume from which so much valuable information has been obtained, we extract the following (17):

Mrs. Sarah Edwards, the amiable consort of President Edwards, did not long survive him. In September she set out in good health on a journey to Philadelphia, to take care of her two orphan grandchildren, which were now in that city, and had been since the death of Mrs. Burr. As they had no relations in those parts, Mrs. Edwards proposed to take them into her own family. She arrived there by the way of Princeton, September 21, in good health, having had a comfortable journey, but in a few days she was suddenly seized with a violent complaint which put an end to her life on the fifth day, October 2, 1758, in the 49th year of her age. She said not much in her sickness. On the morning of the day she died, she apprehended her death was near; when she expressed her entire resignation to God, and desired that God might be glorified in all things; and that she might be enabled to glorify him to the last: and continued in such a temper, calm and resigned, till she died.

Her remains were carried to Princeton, which is about forty miles from Philadelphia, and deposited with Mr. Edwards'. Thus, they who were in their lives remarkably lovely and pleasant, in their death were not much divided. Here lie the father and mother, the son and daughter, who are laid together in the grave, within the space of a little more than a year, though a few months ago their dwelling was more than 150 miles apart. Two presidents of the same college and their consorts, than whom it will doubtless be hard to find four



person more valuable and useful; in a few months are cut off from the earth forever; and by a remarkable providence are put, as it were, into one grave! And we the survivors are left under the gloomy apprehension that these righteous are taken away from the evil to come!

Surely America is greatly emptied by these deaths! How much knowledge, wisdom, holiness is gone from the earth forever! And where are they who shall make good their ground!



**Mrs. Sarah Pierpont Edwards.**



## CHAPTER V

### REVEREND AARON BURR

**R**EV. AARON BURR, father of Col. Aaron Burr, was born January 4, 1716, at Fairfield, Conn. He was the son of Daniel Burr, and a descendant of John Burr. His ancestors were persons of great respectability. Mr. Burr was graduated at Yale College in 1735, at the age of nineteen, in the class with Joseph Bellamy. He won the Berkeley scholarship, indicating that he was one of the best three in his class in Greek and Latin. He was converted during the revival at New Haven, November, 1736. The same year he was licensed, and preached his first sermon in Greenfield, Mass., after which he labored a short time in Hanover, N. J.

At a town meeting held in Newark, N. J., December 21, 1736, a vote was taken as to whether they should extend a call to Mr. Burr for the further improvement in the work of the ministry among them, which was carried in the affirmative. On the 30th day of December, the committee waited on Mr. Burr, extending the call and agreeing with him for one year, to commence from the tenth day of January, 1737, for which services he was to have the sum of £60 (26). His work was eminently successful, and he was looked upon as one of the most learned divines and accomplished scholars of his time.

In 1748 he was unanimously elected President of the New Jersey College (Princeton) which he was instrumental in founding, succeeding Rev. Jonathan Dickinson. The college was then at Elizabethtown, N. J., but was removed to Newark, N. J., in 1757.

On June 29, 1752, Mr. Burr married Esther Edwards, and resided at the parsonage at Newark, N. J. Two children were born to them — a daughter Sarah, May 3, 1754, and a son, Aaron Burr, February 6, 1756.

On the twenty fourth day of September, 1757, Mr. Burr died of nervous fever, and was buried at Princeton, N. J., in the cemetery which is part of the college grounds, Rev. Jonathan Edwards' grave adjoining.

Mr. Charles Burr Todd gives an interesting account of the Rev. Aaron Burr's daughter Sarah, and her descendants (4):

Rev. Aaron Burr, of Newark, N. J., settled at Newark as pastor of the First Church, Jan. 10, 1737. He married Esther, daughter of Rev. Jonathan Edwards, June 29, 1752. Their children were:

Sarah, born May 3, 1754, married Judge Tappan Reeve, June 24, 1772, and had one son, Aaron Burr, born Oct. 3, 1780, who graduated at Yale College, 1802, married Annabella Sheldon, of New York, Nov. 21, 1808, settled at Troy, N. Y., as attorney and counsellor-at-law, and died there Sept. 1, 1809, leaving a son, Tapping Burr Reeve, born at Troy, Aug. 16, 1809, who died at Litchfield, Conn., Aug. 28, 1829, while a student in Yale College. Annabella, widow of Aaron Burr Reeve, married David J. Burr, of New Haven, and removed to Richmond, Va.

Tappan Reeve, Chief Judge of the Superior Court of Connecticut, died Dec. 13, 1823, aged 79. Sarah, his wife, died March 30, 1797. Judge Reeve was born in Brookhaven, L. I., October, 1744, graduated at Princeton College in 1763, and until 1772 was a tutor in that insti-



**Law School at Litchfield, Conn., (1784) first conducted by Judge Tappan Reeve.**



tution. Early in that year he came to Litchfield, Conn., and began the practice of law in that then important village. . . . In 1798 he was chosen judge of the Superior Court of Connecticut. "Judge Reeve," says Hollister in his History of Connecticut, "was a man of ardent temperament, tender sensibilities, and of a nature deeply religious. He was the first eminent lawyer in this country to dare to arraign the common law of England for its severity and refined cruelty in cutting off the natural rights of married women and placing their property, as well as their persons, at the mercy of their husbands, who might squander it or hoard it up at pleasure."

He is described as a most venerable man in appearance, with thick gray hair parted and falling in profusion over his shoulders, his voice only a loud whisper, but distinctly heard by his earnestly attentive pupils.

In 1784 Judge Reeve established the first law school in the United States at Litchfield. He remained in charge of it until 1820, when Judge James Gould, afterwards a member of the United States Supreme Court, succeeded him and continued it until 1833. During the half century of its existence fully one thousand pupils attended, of whom 16 became United States senators, 50 members of the House of Representatives, 40 judges, 10 governors, 5 cabinet ministers, and 2 vice-presidents of the United States, one of whom was John C. Calhoun. The building is still standing (1906) in a good state of preservation.

A fuller account of Judge Reeve's life and work may be found in an article entitled "Litchfield Hill" in Harper's Magazine, March, 1887.

One of the most comprehensive short biographies written of the elder Aaron Burr is by President J. E. Rankin, of Howard University, who is also the author and editor of "Esther Burr's Journal," to which reference will be made in the chapter



relating to Mrs. Esther Burr, the mother of Colonel Aaron Burr (27).

The Bible says, "Let no man glory in men." When Princeton was founded, when Nassau Hall was built, there was no name more honorable among the American Colonies than that of Aaron Burr. In the Town Records of Newark, N. J., December 30, 1736, is this entry: "Town meeting treated with Mr. Aaron Burr and agreed to give him £60 for one year from January 10."

That was the beginning of a pastorate of unusual harmony, length and usefulness. For fifteen years the young pastor lived unmarried. Was he waiting until Esther Edwards of Northampton was of a suitable age? She came with her mother, escorted by a young student of Princeton, on June 29, 1741, aged 19. Whether or not it was owing to the pressure of professional duties, the Christian young bridegroom had his bride conducted to him as did Isaac of old.

And it is doubtful whether Esther Edwards, riding on horseback through the wilderness from Stockbridge to the Hudson, and then sailing down the river in a sloop, and then across the bay to Newark, did not have the severer experiences. The kind of civilization to which he introduced his bride in Newark may be gathered from this town action, 1746-47: "Voted that whosoever shall cut timber on the Parsonage land, shall forfeit 10 shillings a load." Also from this action in 1754: "Every tree cut on Parsonage land shall be 20 shillings; one-half of it to go to the informer."

The elder Aaron Burr was born in Fairfield, Conn., 1716. The family had been there for three generations, named: Jehu, Jehu, Jr., Daniel, Aaron — all upright and honorable men. He was the youngest of six sons and very fond of study. He graduated at Yale, 1733, in the class with Joseph Bellamy. . . .

Mr. Burr was in closest intimacy with President Edwards of Northampton, and the Tennents in New Jersey. These men wanted in New Jersey a training school for ministers of a different type from that then at New Haven, where David Brainerd, the missionary to the Indians, had lately been expelled, and where he was, as they thought, mercilessly hindered from graduating with his class, although he made the humblest apologies for speaking unadvisedly concerning one of the tutors. Mr. Burr believed in the ministrations of Whitefield. Indeed, in August, 1739, before Whitefield ever preached in



The Rev. Aaron Burr, father of Vice President Aaron Burr.



the region, a remarkable revival began in Newark and was confined to that city. The young preacher's labors were marked by so much fervor, directness, tact, and grace; he was so faithful and persevering; he had such winning manners; he so lived out in his life what he preached in the pulpit; he had such unusual rhetorical and literary gifts.

Princeton grew out of a germ planted by the Rev. Jonathan Dickinson, of Elizabethtown, who, like nearly all of the ministers of the period, had several young men under training for the ministry. The first charter was granted on October 26, 1746.

Mr. Burr, who also had a Latin School of his own in Newark, was one of the charter members. Two years later, in Newark, the charter was enlarged, and Mr. Burr was chosen president, Mr. Dickinson having died. A class of seven, all of whom became ministers, graduated that year. Princeton College remained eight years in Newark, and seven of these years Mr. Burr was both pastor and president, serving in the latter capacity three years without salary, and contributing of his own means. He taught mathematics, calculated eclipses, and published a Latin grammar, and, in 1752, delivered a Latin oration on the death of Doddridge; still acting as pastor. During the stay of the college at Newark, ninety received the degree of A. B.

Whatever has been done since, the work of Mr. Burr in establishing Princeton cannot be looked upon but with great honor. When Princeton came down from Elizabethtown to Newark, it had not where to lay its head. Mr. Burr's house was its home. Mrs. Burr was introduced to two great interests, which focused in her family circle. Contemporary records show that often she, with her little children and very inefficient and unreliable help, had twenty housed under her roof at one time.

Meantime, Mr. Burr was in New York soliciting funds and was attending meetings of the Presbytery, was driving to Elizabethtown to see the Governor of the Colony, was preaching and teaching as though he was one of God's swift-winged ministers, with celestial life. Small of stature, delicate in frame, quick as lightning in conception, capable of great labors, modest, easy, courteous, obliging, adored by his flock, who were reluctant to allow his departure; a favorite with his brother ministers; he actually laid himself upon the altar of sacrifice. Well may his dust and that of his heroic helpmate sleep under Princeton shadows and be remembered in the days of her glory.

The following account of the life and work of the Rev. Aaron Burr is from the pen of Rev. Jonathan F. Stearns, D.D. (28):

"Sept. 29, 1757. Last Saturday died the Rev. Mr. Aaron Burr, President of the New Jersey College, a gentleman and a Christian, as universally beloved as known; an agreeable companion, a faithful friend, a tender and affectionate husband, and a good father; remarkable for his industry, integrity, strict honesty and pure undissembled piety; his benevolence as disinterested as unconfined; an excellent preacher, a great scholar, and a very great man."

The glowing eulogy of William Livingston, supported by the plain, unvarnished statements of Caleb Smith, and endorsed by the weighty testimony of Benjamin Franklin, seems to have little more to be desired in attestation of the genuine merit of the subject of its commendation.

Mr. Burr's life was prolonged only one year after he left Newark. He never presided at a commencement exercise at Princeton. In the month of August, 1757, being then in a feeble state of health, he made a hasty visit to his father-in-law, at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and returning, hastened to Elizabethtown on some business with the Government relating to the interests of the College. Here he learned that his esteemed friend, the Rev. Caleb Smith, of Newark Mountain, had just been bereaved of his wife. He hastened to mourn with and console him; and, having no time to prepare a sermon, preached extemporaneously a funeral discourse from the words, "Will-ing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord."

Still suffering from indisposition, he made a journey to Philadelphia on business for the College, in that sultry season, and returned home exhausted with fatigue and already the subject of an intermittent fever, only to meet a new demand upon his exertions. His old friend, the generous patron of the institution over which he presided, Governor Belcher, had just deceased, and he was expected to do honor to his memory in a funeral sermon. "You will not think it strange," says his excellent wife, after his decease, "if it has imperfections, when I tell you that all he wrote on the subject was done in a part of one afternoon and evening, when he had a violent fever on him, and the whole night after he was irrational." Completing his preparations, he



**The "Lower Green," Newark, New Jersey.**



**Nassau Hall, the foundation of Princeton University, of  
which Col. Burr's father and grandfather  
were Residents.**



rode forty miles to Elizabethtown, and preached the discourse before a vast assembly, on Lord's day, Sept. 4. "It grieved his friends," says Mr. Smith, "to behold the languor of his countenance, and observe the failure of his harmonious delivery, not having strength for that clear utterance or spirit, for that free, lively, animated address with which he used to entertain and charm an audience." He returned home, and his disorder soon took the form of a nervous fever, terminating his life on the 24th of September, 1757. He left the College in a flourishing condition, and died in the very midst of a most powerful display of Divine grace in the conversion of great numbers in that institution. It was a fearful stroke to the whole community.

On his deathbed Mr. Burr had given directions that no unnecessary parade should be made at his funeral, and no expenses incurred beyond what Christian decency would require. The sum necessary for the expenses of a fashionable funeral, which by this order would be saved, he directed should be given to the poor, out of his estate. His funeral was attended amidst a large concourse of lamenting friends, and his remains were interred at Princeton.

Mrs. Burr survived her husband less than a year, and died April 7, 1758. They left two children — a daughter and a son — both born during their residence in Newark, and both, it is presumed, baptized within the pale of this church. The former was married to the Hon. Tappan Reeve, of Litchfield, Conn., and the latter, having obtained almost the highest rank in the nation — the heir of his father's accomplishments, but not of his virtues — lies buried at the feet of that illustrious and sainted man, where, in filial reverence, he had desired that his remains should be deposited.

The tombstone of Mr. Burr bears the following inscription, which I copy, with the translation of it, from a pamphlet entitled "History of the College of New Jersey, by a Graduate." It is said to have been prepared by the Hon. William Smith, and revised by the Rev. Messrs. Jacob Green and Caleb Smith:

Sacred to the Memory  
of a most venerable man,  
AARON BURR, A. M., President of the College of New  
Jersey.

He was born of a good family at Fairfield, Conn., on the 4th of  
January, A. D., 1716, O. S



## THEODOSIA

He was educated at Yale College.

Commenced his ministry at Newark, in 1738.

He performed the pastoral office with fidelity about 20 years.

Accepted the Presidency of the College of New Jersey in 1748.

Being transferred to Nassau Hall at the close of 1756,

He died in this village on the 24th of September,

A. D. 1757, N. S.

Beneath this marble is laid all of him that could die;

His immortal part, Heaven has claimed —

Do you ask, Stranger, what he was?

Hear in a few words:

He was a man of a small and weak body, spare with study,  
watching, and constant labors, —

He had sagacity, penetration, quickness and despatch (if it be lawful  
to say so) more than human, almost angelic.

He was skilled in all kinds of learning.

In theology he excelled.

He was a fluent speaker, pleasing and persuasive.

An accomplished orator.

In his manners, easy, frank, and cheerful;

In his life, remarkably liberal and beneficent.

His Piety and Benevolence outshined all other qualities.

Ah, how numerous and how excellent were his examples of

Genius, Industry, Prudence, Patience,

and all other virtues, —

The narrow sepulchral marble refuses to speak them.

Greatly regretted, and much beloved, he was the delight of  
human kind.

O, the unspeakable regret!

The church groans, learning laments:

But Heaven applauds, while he

enters into the joy of his Lord, and

hears, well done good and faithful servant.

Stranger, go and remember thy latter end.

Another interesting remembrance of him is given  
by one who was a tutor in Yale College, while Mr.  
Burr was presiding at Nassau (29):

I was intimately acquainted with President Burr, being tutor at



Fig. 1. First Presbyterian Church at Newark, New Jersey,  
 of which Col. Aaron Burr's father was, at  
 one time, pastor.



10



Yale College during his presidency at Nassau. I have heard him moderate at the commencement at Newark, 1754. He was a little small man as to body, but of great and well improved mind. He was elected president in 1748. He was a hard student, a good classical scholar in the three learned tongues. He was well studied in logic, rhetoric, and natural and moral philosophy, the belles lettres, history, Divinity, and politics. He was an excellent divine and preacher, pious and agreeable, facetious and sociable, the eminent Christian, and every way the worthy man. Like St. Paul, his bodily presence was mean and contemptible, but his mental presence charmed all his acquaintances. He was an honor to his college and an ornament to the republic of letters.

Rev. Aaron Burr was the author of a Latin grammar, which was called "The Newark Grammar." His only other work was entitled "The Supreme Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Another biographer says (30):


President Burr had a slender and delicate frame; yet to encounter fatigue he had a heart of steel. To amazing talents for the despatch of business, he joined a constancy of mind that commonly secured to him success. As long as an enterprise appeared possible, he yielded to no discouragement. The flourishing state of the College of New Jersey was much owing to his great and assiduous exertion. . . .

Few men were more perfect in the art of rendering themselves more agreeable in company. He knew the avenues to the human heart, and he possessed the rare power of pleasing without betraying a design to please. . . .

He inspired all around him with cheerfulness. His arms were open to good men of every denomination. A sweetness of temper, engaging courtesy, and mildness of manner, joined to an engaging ardor of sentiment, spread a glory over his reputation and endeared the person to all his acquaintances.

In Appleton's *Encyclopædia of American Biography* the following allusion is made to the Rev. Aaron Burr:

"As a scholar, preacher, author, and educator,




President Burr was one of the foremost men of his time. To his more solid qualities were added a certain distinguished style of manner which re-appeared in his son, Col. Aaron Burr. . . . Colonel Burr's mother, Esther Edwards, the flower of the remarkable family to which she belonged, was celebrated for her beauty as well as for her superior intellect and devoted piety. In the truest sense Aaron was well born."

Mr. W. Jay Mills gives a word picture of the Parsonage at Newark, where the Rev. Aaron Burr lived, and where his two children, Sally and Aaron, were born (31):

At the corner of Broad and William streets there formerly stood an old vine-covered building, with massive walls and wide window sills, which perhaps in its day was the best loved and most venerated residence in New Jersey. It is now but a fading memory to the oldest Newark residents, for it was destroyed in 1835, just one century after its erection. Few to-day remember the stories which cluster about it and form one of the most interesting portions of the history of the old borough.

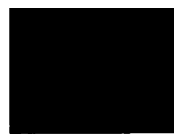
Into its wide old hall, which echoed to the tread of hundreds of famous people before and during the Revolution, a sad-faced divine, in black velvet elegance, leading by the hand a laughing girl in wedding finery, came one bright morning in the long ago, when it was a new dwelling and its history a blank page. They were the Rev. Aaron Burr and his lady, as we read of them in old records, and to this new home had come on their honeymoon. . . .

The Rev. Aaron Burr was at that time the president of the infant College of New Jersey. It had been recently removed to Newark from Elizabethtown. His wife, Esther, fourteen years his junior, was the daughter of the noted Rev. Jonathan Edwards of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, who subsequently, like his distinguished son-in-law, became the head of New Jersey's seat of learning. Tradition asserts that the marriage created much excitement in the sparsely populated village of that day, and a faint echo of it has lived until the present





"The Parsonage" at Newark, New Jersey,  
where Col. Aaron B. Williams



century in a letter of one of the students of the college, who wrote home to his "mammy" that he could not tell "Mrs. Burr's qualities and properties, although he had heard she was a very valuable lady."

In one of the second-story rooms of the old house, this "valuable lady" became the mother of the famous Aaron Burr, and the happy woman, holding him as an infant, could never have dreamed of his meteoric career in which misfortune and a degree of greatness were so strangely mingled. The Burrs lived in the Parsonage until the removal of the College of New Jersey to Princeton, in 1786, and its next occupant was David Brainerd (?), a younger brother of the famous missionary Brainerd.

The following article relating to the Rev. Aaron Burr's account book appeared in a newspaper, the name and date of which it has been impossible to ascertain:

An article by the Rev. Paul Van Dyke, formerly a professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, appears in the September number of the *Magazine of American History*, and it throws many interesting side-lights on the social condition of Colonial New Jersey. It is a sketch of a recently discovered account book, kept by Rev. Aaron Burr, second president of Princeton College, and father of Aaron Burr, the noted vice-president, and antagonist of Alexander Hamilton. As Princeton College was located at Newark from 1747 to 1786, many of the entries in this curious old volume were made while their author was living there as president of the College and pastor of the First Presbyterian Church.

The worthy minister and his wife seem to have been compelled to stretch as tightly as possible the lines of living, in order to "make both ends meet," for Mr. Burr's salary was only two hundred and thirty pounds a year. Yet the scanty stipend meant more than now, and was eked out by various thrifty measures.

"For my sermon, one shilling, six pence," says one entry, and Mr. Van Dyke exclaims with clerical honor, "Think of it, ye clerical professors who grumble over moderate fees!" Mr. Van Dyke continues: There was apparently a difference of rates, for there is an entry: "By cash paid Mr. Tennent for preaching to Indians, £4, 1s. 8." Could it have been that Indian preaching was worth more because of its



difficulty? But possibly Mr. Tennent preached sixty-five and a third sermons to the Indians, at the rate of one and three pence.

Mr. Burr also appears to have driven a small trade in books and stationery. "To the Rev. Jonathan Edwards (his father-in-law) one quire of paper, one shilling, three pence," is written in an unmistakably feminine hand, probably his wife's. Translations, or in college vernacular, "trots," were included in the sales, and a certain "translation of Xenophon in two volumes" is frequently alluded to.

The account book was used also by Mrs. Burr for household expenses, and it is amazing to see how the "400" of 1756 conducted their establishments. The following is Mr. Van Dyke's account:

"A certain Edwards obtained a little more than four months board at the presidential table for seven pounds, three shillings, four pence. The Burrs bought beef at two pence a pound, ten pounds of cheese for four shillings, tea at seven shillings a pound. A domestic servant was hired at four shillings a week, a field laborer by the day at two shillings, sixpence. A barrel of old cider cost eight shillings; six bottles of wine, thirteen shillings, sixpence. They bought three horses at prices ranging from fourteen pounds to twenty-two pounds; a cow and a calf at four pounds, fifteen shillings. A black man was sold for rather less than the good horse, and brought seventeen pounds, sixpence."

Death closed this account, as it does every other, and the last entries concern the distribution of the property which thrift and frugality had collected. The legacies, as Mr. Van Dyke says, are a little puzzling, but are interesting for that very reason, and they are inserted here as Mr. Van Dyke has arranged them:

One finds it difficult to imagine what a "suit of Paduasoy" looks like at a distance. How does a "brown Calimanco gown" differ from "one lead colored Ducap ditto," beyond the difference in color? And what is the distinction between a "Calimanco" and a "black Allopeen"? Of course, anyone would tell a "corded Dimity with flowered border" from a "copucheen flowered satin." But why should an "old gauze hood" be accompanied by "two tan mounts"?

We understand that "one mask" was used to preserve Mrs. President's complexion, but what was the "one Vandyke cat-gutted" which is mentioned with it? Was the lawyer who made this inventory assisted by his wife? Aaron Burr was not forgotten in the distribution of finery, for we find that he received "one silver watch, one pair of

silver shoe-buckles, one pair ditto knee-buckles, and Mr. and Mrs. Burr's pictures."

The strict economy of the worthy couple was not without its touch of gilt on the edge, for they left "to Sally Burr," and "for the use of the children," some sixty pounds' worth of silver plate.

Mr. Van Dyke makes a most delightful article out of this precious find, but one inaccuracy is noticeable. He frequently speaks of Mr. Burr as "Doctor," seemingly confounding the title V. D. M. (*Verbi Dei Minister*), which corresponds to the title of Reverend, with the title D. D. The first among the presidents at Princeton to receive the honor of the latter title was Samuel Finley, on whom, in 1763, it was bestowed by the University of Glasgow. He was the first American Presbyterian clergyman on whom the title was conferred. Since his day all the presidents of Princeton have had the title.



## CHAPTER VI

### MRS. ESTHER EDWARDS BURR

**A** BRIEF Account of Mrs. Esther Edwards Burr, and Some Extracts of Letters Wrote by Her," appears in the volume published in Edinburgh (17):

Mrs. Burr exceeded most of her sex in the beauty of her person; and in a decent and easy gesture, behavior, and conversation; not stiff and starch on one hand, nor mean and indecent on the other, in her unaffected natural freedom with persons of all ranks with whom she conversed. Her genius was much more than common. She had a lively, sprightly imagination, a quick and penetrating thought, and a good judgment. She had a peculiar smartness in her make and temper, which yet was consistent with pleasantness and good nature: and she knew how to be pleasant and facetious without trespassing on the bounds of gravity, or strict and serious religion. In short, she seemed to be formed to please, and especially to please one of Mr. Burr's tastes and talents, in whom he was exceedingly happy. But what crowned all her excellencies and was her chief glory was her religion. She was hopefully converted when she was seven or eight years old; and she made a public profession of religion when she was about fifteen years of age; and her conversation and conduct to her death was exemplary as becometh godliness. But as her religious sentiments and exercises will best be understood by those who were strangers to her, by her own words, the following extracts are made from letters which she wrote not long before her death.

The following is from a letter she wrote to her mother, not long after Mr. Burr's death, dated at Princeton, October 7, 1787:

"No doubt, dear madam, it will be some comfort to you to hear that God has not utterly forsaken. altho' he has cast down. I would

speaking it to the glory of God's name that I think He has in an uncommon degree discovered Himself to be an all-sufficient God, a full fountain of all good. Altho' all streams were cut off, yet the fountain is left full.

"I think I have been enabled to cast my care upon Him, and have found great peace and calm in my mind, such as this world cannot give nor take. . . .

"God has helped me to renew my past and present mercies, with some heart-affecting degree of thankfulness. . . .

"I must conclude with once more begging that as my dear parents remember themselves, they would not forget their greatly afflicted daughter, (now a lonely widow) nor her fatherless children.

"My duty to my ever dear and honored parents, love to my brothers and sisters. From, dear madam,

"Your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

"ESTHER BURR."

She wrote to her father, on the 2d of November, 1757:

"Honored Sir:

"Your most affectionate, comforting letter by my brother, was exceedingly refreshing to me, altho' I was something damped by hearing that I should not see you until spring. . . .

"Since I wrote my mother's letter, God has carried me thro' great trials, and given me new supports. My little son has been sick with the slow fever ever since my brother left us, and has been brought to the brink of the grave. But I hope in mercy God is bringing him up again. I was enabled to resign the child (after a severe struggle with nature) with the greatest freedom. God showed me that the child was not my own, but His; and that He had a right to recall what He had lent, whenever He thought fit, and I had no reason to complain, or say God was hard with me. This silenced me. . . .

"God is certainly fitting me for Himself; and when I think it will be soon that I shall be called hence, the thought is transporting."

The Hon. Milton William Reynolds was born in Elmira, N. Y., May 23, 1833. He died at Edmond, Oklahoma, August 9, 1890. He was graduated from the University of Michigan in 1856.

He was a member of the Legislatures of Nebraska and Kansas; Receiver of the United States Land Office, at Independence, Kansas; and Regent of the Kansas State University. He had just been elected a member at large of the first State Legislature of Oklahoma at the time of his death, which was caused by nervous prostration, superinduced by a most exciting political campaign. He was a journalist by profession and well known in Kansas and Oklahoma under the *nom de plume* of "Kicking Bird."

From a lecture delivered by him on Aaron Burr, the selection which follows relating to Esther Edwards is taken:

Nearly a century and a half ago, in the quiet village of Stockbridge, lived Esther Edwards. She was the daughter of the great Jonathan Edwards, who wrote the *Principia* of New England theology. This stern and inflexible disciple of Calvinistic faith was the leader of that school of theology which expanded the brain and nursed and nurtured the conscience, but benumbed the affections and dwarfed the sensibilities. With his ten children, Jonathan Edwards was so poor that while writing his treatise on the Will, with difficulty he obtained the paper to impress his immortal and divine thoughts thereon, and the printer had to receive them, transcribed in faultless chirography upon the backs of letters and blank pages from cast-away pamphlets. His daughter made lace and painted fans and sent them to Boston to obtain means to aid in the scanty support of the family. At the age of twenty years, while Esther Edwards, the third of these charming and industrious daughters, was working more deftly than usual with her Ely-white fingers, there came to this country village, then on the edge of the wilderness, a man already renowned as a theologian; and he bent over her, or by her side sat and watched her skillful fingers weave the beautiful lace and decorate the gauzy fan paper. He staid but three days at Stockbridge. It was meet that he should go about his Father's business.

But Esther Edwards wove no more lace and painted no more fans for the fair Boston ladies thereafter. The Rev. Aaron Burr had

called her to be his wife, and she became the mother of Aaron Burr, the weird, mystic, and mysterious man whose life has been a stupendous enigma, and whose history is worthy of study for warning, for reproof, for admiration, for commiseration and pity. . . .

One of the college students, in a letter to the *New York Gazette*, July 20, 1752, mentions the event as follows: "In the latter end of May the President took a journey into New England, and during his absence he made a visit of but three days to the Rev. Mr. Edwards' daughter at Stockbridge; in which short time, though he had no acquaintance with, nor had ever seen, the lady these six years, I suppose he accomplished his whole design; for it was not above a fortnight after his return here, before he sent a young fellow (who came out of college last fall) into New England to conduct her and her mother down here. They came to town on Saturday evening, the 27th ult., and on the Monday evening following the nuptial ceremonies were celebrated between Mr. Burr and the young lady. As I have yet no manner of acquaintance with her, I cannot describe to you her qualifications and properties. However, they say she is a very valuable lady. I think her a person of great beauty, though I must say she is rather too young (being twenty-one years of age) for the President. This account you will doubtless communicate to mammy, as I know she has Mr. Burr's happiness much at heart."

Dr. Banks thus refers to her (11):

The family of Edwards, when he went to Stockbridge, included ten children, one daughter having died (Jerusha). Two of the older daughters were married about the time when their father's difficulties were at their height — Mary, at the age of sixteen, and Sarah, at the age of twenty-two — events which must have called off his mind from his troubles, and renewed his interest in the changes and chances of this mortal life. Of the daughters who went with him to Stockbridge, Esther was one, to whose beauty, inherited from both parents, as well as her intellectual brightness, tradition bears ample testimony. She had attracted the attention of the Rev. Aaron Burr, a noted personage in those aristocratic days, and to Stockbridge the devoted lover followed her, gaining her consent to matrimony in a short courtship. Mr. Burr was a man of brilliant qualities, who had recently been called to the presidency of Nassau Hall — what was afterwards to become known as Princeton College.

There were two children from this union, one of them a boy, named after his father, Aaron Burr, who became the famous, and later the infamous, Aaron Burr, who occupies so peculiar a place in American history.

In the latter part of 1903 a book was published entitled "Esther Burr's Journal." A review of the work appeared in a Boston newspaper (32):

The name on the title page of the little book purporting to be the diary of Esther Edwards Burr, the daughter of Jonathan Edwards, is that of Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Eames Rankin, who describes himself as "author and editor." Dr. Rankin, who resigned the presidency of Howard University last March, and who, before holding that position, had a pastorate for a time in Orange, puts the "Journal" forward without explanation. At the end of the volume is a brief "final note," including the following extract from "The Life of Jonathan Edwards":

She (Esther Edwards Burr) exceeded most of her sex in the beauty of her person, as well as in her behavior and conversation. She discovered an unaffected, natural freedom toward persons of all ranks with whom she conversed. She had a lively, sprightly imagination, a quick, penetrating discernment, and a good judgment. . . . She left a number of manuscripts, and it was hoped that they would be made public, but they are now lost.

Most of the "Journal" as it now appears was written by Dr. Rankin, who for years had been interested in the Burr and Edwards families. The diary, entries in which were jotted down from time to time for his own entertainment, became before long a narrative covering practically all Esther Edwards Burr's life. Dr. Rankin gave readings from the "Journal" on certain occasions, and had its publication in mind. About two years after the "Journal" had taken form, Dr. Rankin, by a circumstance as strange as it was fortuitous, had access to a diary, yellow with age, which he had every reason to believe was written by Esther Burr. The request was made of Dr. Rankin that he withhold the source of his information, but he was given the privilege of using certain of the facts. Hence the dual role of author and editor, and the lack of an answer in the book itself of the question of the authority of the "Journal" which is raised in the mind of the reader.

It may be that before long some exact statement will be made, not only as to the extent Dr. Rankin has drawn on original documents, but also as to the location of these documents, and the publication of the supposed authentic diary may follow. In the meantime, "Esther Burr's Journal" as put forward by Dr. Rankin, is of interest as depicting with much art the life of a prominent woman of the eighteenth century. That it is based on familiarity with family history is assured from Dr. Rankin's well-known researches into the subject, and whether the solid basis for the diary is large or small, the material is handled with great ingenuity.

The following extracts are taken from the work in question (§§):

This is my ninth birthday, and Mrs. Edwards, my mother, has had me stitch these sundry sheets of paper into a book to make me a journal. Methinks, almost all this family keep journals; though they seldom show them.

Mr. Samuel Hopkins, who has just been graduated from New Haven College, and who pleads to study divinity with Mr. Edwards, came to our house to-day. . . . We girls, Jerusha, Mary and I, seeing his immense frame, his great honest face, and hearing his ponderous voice, have maliciously nick-named him "Old Sincerity." Mother shakes her head at us and puts her finger on her lips.

Mrs. Edwards was thirty-three years old to-day. That seems very old. I wonder if I shall live to be thirty-three. And Mr. Edwards is forty-seven years older than she. . . . I do not think we girls will ever be so saintly as our mother is. . . . I do not know as I want to be, which is very wicked I am sure. I think that perhaps Sarah may; she is the flower of this family.

A flaming young preacher, just from the college at New Haven, has come to town. He preaches every day, and twice a day. . . . My precious mother, though she would gladly conceal it, is not a little exercised to see the people flocking after the young herald of the Cross, as though they never heard preaching before. His name is Buell, and he is a classmate in college of Samuel Hopkins.

Mr. Buell will stay the second week and then Mr. Hopkins will go





with him, as a kind of armor-bearer, or lieutenant, to Boston, to capture that city for the Lord.

If father ever gets low-spirited from his "humors" as he calls them, mother's voice is to him like medicine, as David's harp was to King Saul. And when she once begins, there is Sarah, and Jerusha, and myself, like the ascending pipes of an organ, ready to unite in making a joyful noise to the Lord, all over the house, so that our home is more like an aviary than the dwelling of a Colonial parson.


My mother says my journal thus far is rather stilted and mature for me; though everything in the family is mature. I have a letter of my father's written when he was younger than I am, which shows where the present writer gets her maturity.

I have just been caring for my mocking-bird, who is now rewarding me with a song. The cat was lurking in the hall, and I have just driven her away with the broom, with which I have been sweeping the living-room.

I have just come back from a most wonderful ride with my honored father, Mr. Edwards, through the spring woods. He usually rides alone. But to-day he said he had something he wanted to show me. The forests between the house and the full-banked river were very beautiful. The wild cherry and the dogwood were in full bloom. The squirrels were leaping from tree to tree, and the birds were making a various melody. . . . When we reached the "Indian's Well," I slid off and brought a birch-bark cup of crystal water for father to drink. But not before I had given myself a great surprise. For, having put on my mother's hat in sport, the first reflection in the dark water seemed to be the face of my mother instead of my own.

My mother has just come into the house with a bunch of sweet peas, and put them on the stand where my honored father is shaving, though his beard is very slight. . . . My honored father, of course, has not time to give attention to the garden, and so Mrs. Edwards looks after everything there.

Rev. Samuel Hopkins, my father's student in theology, has some very strong opinions against slavery. He once said to my father that he believed God would yet overrule for his glory, and the coming of the



blacks to this country; quoting what Joseph said: "Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."


The Rev. Samuel Hopkins has just paid us a short visit. A very strong attachment has sprung up between this young preacher and my honored father. Indeed, I believe he has made my father and mother his confidants in a certain affair of the heart, which relates to himself. A certain young lady in Northampton — none of the Edwards girls — is the object of this attachment, and alas, it is not successful. It gives us girls a great theme.

Mr. Edwards, my father, is feeling much hurt because President Chap and the trustees have treated Mr. Brainerd so shabbily and cruelly. My father says, as I think, New Haven College has lost the brightest jewel she will ever wear in her crown. Mr. Brainerd was expelled from the college for saying of one of the tutors, who seemed indifferent to religious activity, that he had no more religion than a chair.

Mr. Brainerd is likely to become a member of this family, it seems. Soon after coming to Northampton, he displayed strong affinity for Jerusha, our sister of seventeen, who was soon inoculated with his high spiritual views, and deeply interested in his Indian work. . . . I believe he loves her more because she will make a good missionary than for any other reason. But little does the dear girl care.

Feb. 13, 1747. I was awakened in the morning by some one's kissing me on my eyes and my mouth and my ears. In the haze of my morning dreams, I thought it might be the angels. But no, I soon saw that it was my angel-mother, and she was half saying and half singing: "Awake, my Esther, my queen. This is the day of thine espousals. For the King delighteth in thee and calleth thee by name. He brings thee to His banquetting-house and His banner over thee is love." Then I remembered it was my fifteenth birthday, and also that I was that day to take upon me the vows of God.

Jerusha has just returned from her sojourn in Boston with her sick charge, David Brainerd, the Indian missionary. They came by easy stages, but he is much exhausted, and I believe is not long for this world. Never was there such devotion, shall I say idolatry, bestowed upon mortal man. Never was there so humble a handmaid of the



Lord as Jerusha. . . . Her whole nature goes out after spiritual things, and this man is her ideal. She actually almost worships the ground he treads upon.

The sainted sufferer of the house, our temporary guest, our brother in the Lord, has at length breathed his last. . . . To our Jerusha, his long-time nurse, who has watched and almost felt every pang of his poor racked body, for many months, he said: "Dear Jerusha, are you willing to part with me? I am quite willing to part with you. Though if I thought I should not see you and be happy with you in another world, I could not bear to part with you. But we will spend a happy eternity together."

Of course my honored father preached the discourse at Mr. Brainerd's funeral. His text was: "Absent from the body, but present with the Lord." . . . Dear Jerusha's illuminated face was a study. She was rapt up no more in the living. It seemed as though her soul, liberated from earth, was already mounting up to holy communion with the spirits of the just made perfect. . . . It seemed to me as though she saw heaven open, the golden gates lifted up, and was only waiting for the angel-wings to mount there. She is not long for this world. For exactly nineteen weeks, day and night, she has cared for this sick man; and she only eighteen.

This day our dear Jerusha died at eighteen. If, as she and her sainted David and we all believe, she be gone to her Father's house, she has already joined the holy company, of which he since last October has been one. They have been separated only five months. Though I doubt whether he has ever been absent from her thoughts and longing love.

Great excitement has been occasioned by a New Year's sleigh-ride and ball for dancing, that has just occurred here. It was a gay party of young people, some of my more intimate friends among them, who drove to a hotel in Hadley, and spent the hours till midnight in dancing the Old Year out and the New Year in. . . . To my honored father and mother it has been a time of great grief. And when, with morning light, the great sled-loads drove up through the streets, with their laughing, giddy freight, I saw the tears in the eyes of them both.

We have just been permitted to read Richardson's novel: "Sir



Charles Grandison." Our father and mother have first read it and regard it as a wholly suitable book as to morals and character. . . . Of course to read such a book is an unusual event in such a family of ours. And we have had a great time taking it in turn and discussing its characters.

This day we leave dear, sweet Northampton, where all of us have been born, and where we have so many ties of childhood and youth. Even the very trees around our home seem a part of us. There is one elm that is called my father's, he has so long studied beneath it. . . . One of the bitterest experiences connected with this removal is the fact that some of the active instigators of it are actually flesh of our flesh, and blood of our blood.

Nothing could be more beautiful than the manner in which Mr. and Mrs. Edwards have submitted to the decision of the Council with its majority of only one, recommending our removal from this place. We children have been indignant beyond expression.

A letter to Mr. Edwards, my honored father, from Mr. Burr, states that the New Jersey College was organized under an enlarged charter Nov. 9, and that he has been chosen President to succeed Mr. Dickinson, who has lately died. For the present he will serve without salary.

It is the practice of Mr. Edwards to finish his own meal, which is always very simple, and then return to the table to say grace, at the close, when we are all done. This morning, as he did not come at once, my dear mother, who always herself says grace when father is absent from home, said that Jonathan Edwards, Jr., who is just past eight years old, might officiate. This pleased us all. For he fell into father's exact words and intonations, as a child would do, without seeming to intend it. . . . As to Jonathan, Jr., we all expect that some day he will make a great divine; though outwardly he does not resemble our father, being dark, and plain, and very small.

I have just come in from West Stockbridge road, with my cheeks all aglow and pulse beating wildly. My sister and I had two Indian boys to pull our sleds for us, and to guide them over the crust, which flashes like a mirror, as with lightning rapidity we speed from one descent to another, until we finally reach the level of our quiet street.

Even Stockbridge has my honored father's enemies. . . . Not

Indians, but the scattered remnants of that bitter company who moved my father from Northampton.

My father has just written to his own father: "My wife and children are well pleased with our present situation. They like the place far better than they expected. Here, at present, we live in peace; which has, of a long time, been unusual to us. The Indians feel much pleased with our family, especially my wife."

Very improper use has been made of the moneys which have been sent here by Mr. Hollis, the English patron of the Indian schools. The individual who has received these moneys has had no school established, and kept no regular account of his expenditures. The Indian children have been permitted to grow up in filth and ignorance. But as this man has married into the family of a resident trustee, all of this is covered up. But, of course, Mr. Edwards feels bound in duty to communicate the facts to the Boston commissioners.

Miss Sally Prince of Boston, whose father is a great friend of my father's, and who is herself a great friend of mine, has been writing me about the sports of the winter in that city. With us simple country people, the chief place of social recreation and amusement is the singing-school. . . . Sometimes, indeed, we have sleighing parties, and those who love dancing finish up such parties with a social dance. Though my honored father believes that such customs are full of danger to young people.

This family is very busy making lace and embroidery, so as to replenish the household treasury. In Northampton my honored father had purchased a valuable homestead, with land for fuel and pasturing, and had erected a commodious dwelling house. These had, by our exercising the strictest economy, all been paid for, before his removal. Among the bitterest of our experiences, therefore, was to be sent roofless and homeless to a wilderness. . . . He has lately had a hexagonal table built, with six several inclining leaves, so that he can have his books of reference before his eyes all at once, and can leave them open at the passage where he leaves off.


A new sound echoes through our hills. Every Sabbath day, and every lecture day, one of the praying Indians <sup>blows</sup> a conch-shell, to call the people to worship. At first it seemed in solemnity,

but, now we are used to it, the shell begins to have a sacred sound and the summons is speedily heeded.

This has just happened to me: Rev. Mr. Burr, of Newark, President of the New Jersey College, who has visited our house both in Northampton and Stockbridge for many years — as a little girl I have romped with him and sat on his lap — rose this A. M. to take an early breakfast and start for home again, betimes, on horse-back to the Hudson. And, as it was my week to care for the table, I had spread the breakfast for him, no other member of the family having yet arisen. The cloth was as white as snow, for I had taken out a fresh one with its clean smell, for the occasion, and there was not a crease in it; the room was full of the aroma of the freshly made tea. I had selected some of the last caddy, that came from the Rev. Thomas Prince's of Boston, a family very dear to us. The newly churned butter was as yellow as gold. I had rolled it and stamped it with my own hands. And to top the whole, one of our father's deacons, an Indian who knew of Mr. Burr's early start, had brought in some fish, freshly taken from the Housatonic. Mr. Burr partook with the greatest relish, keeping up a current of gracious speech every moment; and finally, fixing his flashing eyes on me, as I sat rapt and listening at the other end of the board, he abruptly said: "Esther Edwards, last night I made bold to ask your honored father, if I can gain your consent, that I might take you as Mrs. Burr, to my Newark bachelor's quarters, and help convert them into a Christian home. What say you?" . . . I was wholly unprepared for this sudden speech and blushed to my ears and looked down, and stammered out, as we are taught to say here: "If it please the Lord." Though when we came to separate, I could not help playfully saying: "Was it the loaves and fishes, Mr. Burr?" He laughed and kissed me for the first time. . . . My dear mother appeared to surmise the new secret of my life, for doubtless, Mr. Edwards had told her, as they have no secrets from each other, but said nothing. . . . I could not help asking myself: "Has he been waiting for me all these years?"

The pressure of duties upon Mr. Edwards, my honored father, has been so great that it seems almost impossible for him to endure it.

My honored mother is fearful that his health will be utterly broken down. Indeed, he already has the symptoms of ague and fever, which is very prevalent in these new settlements.




This is my last day in Stockbridge, in this dear home with my honored mother and sisters. The orchards are filled with apple-bloom, as for a bride. Dear, beautiful Stockbridge; the sweetest place on earth, with her mountains tree-topped to the blue skies, her miniature meadows along the Housatonic, where the Indians have their picturesque encampments.

I have sometimes essayed a description to myself of Mr. Edwards. Let me do it again before I leave my father's house for the house of my husband. His face is almost womanly in refinement and feature, and grace. There is a kind of sweet sedateness, an elevated, almost celestial serenity, to some, perhaps, severity of expression. And when he is speaking in the pulpit, it often seems that his voice has a supernatural, and angelic tenderness and authority. There is in his utterance no weakness or softness, though it is not a loud voice nor very masculine.

The good man who has chosen me for his bride has sent a young messenger from Newark, with two horses, to conduct my honored mother and myself to New Jersey. He says there is plenty of scripture for it. Did not Isaac thus send for Rebekah? I am to ride Nimrod, Mr. Burr's great admiration and pride. I am glad to go. . . . I hope it is not wrong to feel so. I had to kiss the bark of the elm tree that stands in front of my window, and where I have so often watched the returning robins, as they built their nests and reared their young, and then taught them to fly away; and now I am to stretch my wings and go, after their example.

This day I was married to the man who has chosen me for his helpmate in the Lord. . . . He is my senior in years, but is young and elastic in spirit, full of Christian enterprise. Though short in stature, compared with my honored father, who is very tall; and though of a delicate frame like my father, he is all energy and zeal, moving here and there and everywhere, almost like a flash of light. And yet he is modest and unassuming; though everywhere at his ease; courteous too, and obliging to all.

My husband, Mr. Burr, has persuaded me to take up Latin with him. I had learned it a little in our home at Northampton, where there was much teaching of the classics.



It has been a great refreshment to my soul to-day to hear again Mr. Edwards, my honored father, from the pulpit. I still think there is none like him. . . . There are those in two continents who honor and revere his name, though Northampton, in her worldly pride, cast him out and spat upon him. . . . I shall yet live to see how humbly some of those people will return with confession and tears. Though this is not becoming in a minister's daughter and a minister's wife.

Sometimes our colored man, Harry, who is very conceited about his skill as a horseman, drives Mr. Burr on his trips, but at this season of the year, the roads are so unsettled, Mr. Burr prefers the saddle.

I have had a sweet and precious letter from my own dear and honored mother, full of sympathy and appreciation. . . . This was in answer to a letter in which I had intimated a happy secret, which is gladdening our Newark home.

The first year of my married life I often found myself comparing Mr. Burr, my good husband, with Mr. Edwards, my honored father. . . . I think my father more impressive and solemn; but Mr. Burr is more ingratiating and captivating; has more of what people call eloquence. My honored father has such rigid and intense earnestness, that he is led almost to scorn all adornment of discourse. While of late years, writing on his abstract treatises, and preaching largely to the Indians of Stockbridge, who are but little demonstrative, he has grown more and more careless of outward grace. Besides, he is by nature more reserved. Mr. Burr's nature seems to bubble up and overflow into expression. . . . Since 1738, beginning with his twenty-third year, he has been pastor here.

This day is the appointed day for our wood carting. The farmers in our parish bring load after load of wood from the parsonage lot, and it is chopped up in the yard and made ready for the fire-place. Such a day of confusion it has been! Such a noise of driving oxen, I hope we may never have for a twelve month at least.

Next week the Presbytery is to sit here, and it is expected they will dismiss Mr. Burr from the church and congregation, to give himself wholly to the care of the college. It is a severe strain upon us all. For here, as I have said before, he is almost idolized.

Extremely hurried preparations for the Presbytery. Tuesday pro-



vided a dinner and nobody came until afternoon. Enough to try a body's patience. In the evening they came thick and fast. The Presbytery sat on our affairs and adjourned till January. Our people are in a great pickle. Some of them show a very bad spirit.

I have written to Miss Prince of Boston to please procure for me the following things: 6 fan mounts, two good ones for ivory sticks, two black and white and two white ones;  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound gum arabic, one large pencil and one short one, one dozen of short cake pans, my milk-pot altered to some shape or other, a pair of coral beads, some cod-fish, patterns of caps. Send me word how to cut ruffles and handkerchiefs; send word how they make gowns. I send by Mr. Burr.

Just now I received a letter with a black seal, but it contained blacker news. Governor Belcher is dead; died this A. M. The righteous are taken away from the evil to come. This is such a loss that we cannot expect to have made up in a Governor. I feel quite sunk with this and other bad news. His Lordship is returning to New York, and then Halifax will be taken no doubt.

Mr. Burr has not returned. Heavy news Mr. Belcher's death will be to him.

Sally has got pretty hearty again and is not much of a baby; affects to be thought a woman. Nothing she scorns more than to be told she is a child or baby. We are about sending her to school, but Mr. Burr expects she will prove a numb head. But for my part, I think her about middling in all accounts. She grows thinner and more shapeable. I have taken her to meeting and she behaves very well, and can give a good account of what papa does there. She can say some of Dr. Watts' verses by heart and the Lord's Prayer and some other prayers. But she is not over apt about the matter.

Aaron is a little, dirty, noisy boy, very different from Sally almost in everything. He begins to talk a little, is very sly, mischievous, and has more sprightliness than Sally. I must say he is handsomer, but not so good tempered. He is very resolute and requires a good governor to bring him to terms.

My dear husband, Mr. Burr, is preparing a funeral discourse in memory of Governor Belcher, of Elizabethtown, who died August 31. I have besought him to spare himself the undertaking. To-day he

has been getting the sermon ready, and to-morrow he will ride forty miles to deliver it, when he should be lying upon a sick bed and nursed with the greatest care at home. I fear the worst.

Mr. Burr has returned, but, alas, his fever, which was at first an intermittent kind, has settled into one affecting the brain, and he is much of the time in delirium.

My loss, shall I attempt to describe it? God only can know. What can be written to set forth the affliction of a poor disconsolate widow and two fatherless ones? I have lost all that could be desired in a creature. I have lost all that I ever set my heart on in this world.

My honored father's letter was so affectionate; comforting, and refreshing, that I shall transcribe it in my journal:

STOCKBRIDGE, Nov. 20, 1757.

My dear daughter:

I thank you for your most comfortable letter; but more especially would I thank God that He has granted you such thoughts to write. How good and kind is your Heavenly Father! . . . Perpetual sunshine is not usual in this world, even to God's true saints. But I hope if God should hide His face in some respect, even this will be in faithfulness to you, to purify you, and fit you for yet further and better light. . . .

Timmy is considerably better, though yet very weak. We all unite in love to you, Lucy, and your children. Your mother is very willing to leave Lucy's coming away wholly to you and to her. I am, your most tender and affectionate father,

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

I must copy this letter, too, from my dear widowed mother to poor widowed me; yes, and my two fatherless ones:

STOCKBRIDGE, April 3, 1758.

My dear child:

A holy and a good God has covered me with a dark cloud. O that we may kiss the rod, and lay our hands upon our mouths! The Lord has done it. He has made me adore His goodness, that we have had him so long. But my God lives and He has my heart. O what a legacy my husband and your father has left us. We are all given to God, and there I am, and love to be.

Your ever affectionate mother,

SARAH EDWARDS.

Dr. Rankin died in 1904. Who has possession of the "diary yellow with age" is not known, and it is not probable that it will ever be published in full.

No mention is made in "Esther Burr's Journal" that Miss Esther had a lover before the advent of the Rev. Aaron Burr; in fact, the following words occur in her supposed diary: "I am only seventeen and I had not received such attention from any person," but Miss Crawford, in a most interesting work, devotes a chapter to "The Wooing of Esther Edwards" (34).

Of the beautiful family life of the Edwardses we catch several charming glimpses from the diary of the Rev. Joseph Emerson, of East Pepperell, Massachusetts. Ten children, a fair proportion of them girls, had come to bless the union of these two rarely idealistic spirits, and with one of these the Rev. Joseph Emerson fell desperately in love, when in the course of a return journey after Yale commencement he stayed for a few days at Northampton. Under date of September 17, 1748, we find in Mr. Emerson's journal this, his first reference to the family of his beloved one: "In Wethersfield we met with Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, and concluded to go home with him the beginning of next week by the leave of Providence. We stopped and dined at Hartford and called at Windsor upon Mr. Edwards, father to Mr. Edwards of Northampton, where we were overpersuaded to tarry over the Sabbath. . . .

"Tues. 20. Arrived at Northampton before night.

"Wed. 21. Spent the day very pleasantly: the most agreeable family I was ever acquainted with: much of the presence of God here.

"Sat. Oct. 1. I wrote two letters in the forenoon, one to Mr. Edwards of Northampton, the other to his second daughter, a very desirous person to whom I propose, by divine leave, to make my addresses. May the Lord direct me in so important an affair!"

What answer Mr. Emerson received to his letter, the diary does not tell, but one fancies that it was not altogether encouraging. Yet on the principle that faint heart never won fair lady, we find the Pepperell

minister soon setting out again for Northampton, to plead in person his suit with the girl, then only fifteen years old, who had captivated his fancy. The diary reads:

"Mon. Nov. 7. Set out some time before day on a journey to Northampton to visit Mistress Esther Edwards to treat of Marriage. . . .

"Wed. 9. Got safe to Northampton: obtained the liberty of the house. . . .

"Thurs. 10. I spent chief of the day with Mistress Esther, in whose company the more I am the greater value I have for her.

"Frid. 11. The young lady being obliged to be from home, I spent the day in copying off something remarkable Mr. Edwards hath lately received from Scotland. Spent the evening with Mistress Esther.

"Sat. 12. Spent part of the day upon the business I came about.

"Mon. 14. I could not obtain from the young lady the least encouragement: the chief objection she makes is her youth, which I hope will be removed with time. I hope the disappointment will be sanctified to me, and that the Lord will by his providence order it so that this will be my companion for life. I think I have followed Providence, not gone before it."

Yet this Rev. Joseph Emerson was not a lover to be despised. He himself came of a priestly family, and one of his line afterwards made Concord as famous as Jonathan Edwards had made Northampton. Though but twenty-four at the time he went forth in the hope of bringing home Esther Edwards as his bride, he had already been to Louisburg as chaplain of Sir William Pepperell's expedition, and had preached for some time in the town he had caused to be named in honor of that doughty warrior. That his love for Esther Edwards, then a maiden of fifteen, had in it something of the exaltation to be observed in her father's love for her mother, we cannot doubt. Certainly it was only after repeated rebuffs from the girl and strenuous struggles with himself that this country parson ceased to press his suit, and reluctantly gave up for all time whatever hope he may have cherished that Esther Edwards would tell him "yes."

The entries in the diary continue for many months to dwell upon the desire of this godly youth's heart.

"Thurs. Nov. 17. I came home to my lodgings. I was considerably melancholy under my disappointment at Northampton; concluded notwithstanding, by leave of Providence, to make another trial in the spring.

"Sat. 19. So discomposed I could not study. I could not have thought that what I have lately met with would have had this effect. The Lord hath put me in a very good school. I hope I shall profit by it.

"Mon. Dec. 5. I wrote two letters to Northampton, one to dear Mistress Esther Edwards, who I find ingrosseth too many of my tho'ts, yet some glimmering of hope supported my spirits.

"Sat. March 11. Read something. Received a letter from Mrs. Sarah Edwards who entirely discourages me from taking a journey there to see her daughter, who is so near my heart. I am disappointed. The Lord teach me to profit: may I be resigned."

It is not to be supposed, however, that while this good youth was suffering so severely from the pangs of disappointed love, things were altogether easy and happy in that family which occupied his thoughts. Mrs. Edwards' journal about this date betrays occasional apprehensions. For though the church at Northampton was undoubtedly very proud of its gifted pastor, the crowds still hung upon his lips, there was brewing, just at this time, one of those curious church dissensions to be condoned only after the lapse of so many years that one can see both sides of the controversy. Up to the year 1744 Mr. Edwards retained a firm hold upon the confidence and affections of his people. During that year was sown the seed that ripened into hostility and ultimately led to his dismissal.

## CHAPTER VII

### COLONEL AARON BURR

**I**T is not intended at this time to devote much space to a consideration of the life, character, and deeds of the subject of this chapter. He was connected with so many important events in the history of the Colonies and the United States, and so many forgotten facts have been discovered since his death, that a proper presentation and consideration of them could not be given in a single volume. However it might be expanded, such a work, if written, would have this great disadvantage — that the different epochs in his life would be merged in a continuous story, and when that was completed, it would be exceedingly difficult for the reader to go back and separate the circumstances connected with any one epoch, so that he could form an intelligent judgment of it, independent of other considerations.

For this reason, in writing the present "Life of Colonel Aaron Burr," and, incidentally, including many events in the lives of his contemporaries, it has been deemed best to forsake the usual chronological method and adopt the plan of presenting his life by the chief events therein.

Adopting this plan, a volume will be devoted to "The Presidential Tie in 1800"; another to "The

Burr-Hamilton Duel." The story of "The Blennerhassetts and the Southwestern Conspiracy" will be segregated, so far as possible, from other events in his life. "The Heroes of the Revolution" will afford a medium for a thorough consideration of his military life. His private character will be considered in a volume entitled "Social Life During the Revolution and the Early Days of the Republic."

Probably no American, not excepting Washington, has had so much space devoted to him by biographers and historians, or has been made more often the subject of articles in newspapers and magazines, as Aaron Burr. Orators have dwelt upon what they considered to be his virtues and his vices, and the number of works of fiction and romance in which he has figured as the principal character far exceed those devoted to any other American. Selections from them will form a volume to be entitled "Aaron Burr in Literature." The present trend of thought as regards him will be fully considered in a volume entitled "A Century Later." From the great mass of material collected from all available sources will then be presented the consensus of opinion regarding Burr as a husband, father, gentleman, soldier, lawyer, politician, and statesman. This volume will contain not only the opinions of his best friends, but those of his most bitter enemies. The final volume will consider "Aaron Burr—the Man." All that has been said, and probably all that could be said, to his detriment will be presented. It will then devolve upon the author of this volume to sum up the evidence and present it to the American public.

which will be called upon as a grand jury to register the final verdict on the grandson of Jonathan Edwards. The last volume will include a full presentation of authorities and references made use of in all the volumes, a topical index, a bibliography of all works and articles relating to Colonel Burr, and biographical sketches of those persons whose ideas, opinions, or knowledge have been made use of or referred to in the previous volumes.

It would be unfair to the reader of the present volume if the principal events in the life of Colonel Burr were not presented in some form. For that reason it has been deemed best to provide a condensed summary, a chronological record, or what might be appropriately called a bird's-eye view of his life, covering the period from 1756 to 1836.

Mr. William Eleroy Curtis, in his work entitled "The True Thomas Jefferson," presents what he calls "A Jeffersonian Calendar." Following the same analogy, there is presented herewith

#### A BURRIAN CALENDAR

- 1756. Aaron Burr, Jr., was born February 6, at Newark, N. J.
- 1757. His father, the Rev. Aaron Burr, died September 24, aged forty-one years.
- 1758. His mother, Mrs. Esther Edwards Burr, daughter of the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, died April 7, aged twenty-six years.
- 1769. He entered Princeton College at the age of thirteen, and during his college days was looked upon as one of the brightest scholars. He took the junior prize for English, and



also received the second prize for reading Latin and Greek.

1771. He was one of the founders of the Cleosophic Society, which was, in reality, a debating club. While at college he wrote a number of orations; among them one on "Style," a second on "The Passions," and a third on "An Attempt to Search the Origin of Idolatry," and other subjects.
1772. He was graduated at Princeton College at the age of sixteen years.

He did not receive either of the high honors on his graduation in 1772. He delivered a Commencement oration on "Castle Building."

James Madison, Jr., afterwards fourth President of the United States, was a member of the class of 1771, and at the time Burr was graduated, Jonathan Mason, of Massachusetts, was a member of the sophomore class.

It is interesting to note, in 1780, that James Roosevelt, of New York, delivered the valedictory oration (35).

1773. In the autumn of that year he visited the Rev. Joseph Bellamy, D.D., an intimate friend of his grandfather, the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, and a classmate of his father, the Rev. Aaron Burr, and commenced a course of readings on religious topics. He devoted from sixteen to eighteen hours a day to his studies, but, becoming dissatisfied in the spring of 1774,



Judge Tappan Reeve's House at Litchfield, Conn., where Aaron Burr lived when a young man.



he gave up his studies, expressing the opinion that "the road to Heaven was open to all alike."

1774. He began the study of law with his brother-in-law, Tappan Reeve, Esq., at Litchfield, Conn., being then eighteen years of age.
1775. He enlisted in the Continental Army at Cambridge, Mass., in July, and joined the expedition to Quebec in September. He was then nineteen years of age. He was sent by General Benedict Arnold to convey a message to General Richard Montgomery, by whom he was made a captain. On December 31, according to reliable authorities, Captain Burr carried General Montgomery's body off the field, after the failure of the assault upon Quebec. He was afterwards made Brigade-Major by General Arnold.
1776. Major Burr distinguished himself in the Battle of Long Island, and rescued the brigade of General Knox, September 16.
1776. Major Burr was made aide to General Washington and joined his military family May 20. He resigned his position as he desired more active work in the army.
1776. Major Burr, after resigning his position as aide to General Washington, became aide to General Israel Putnam, being recommended by Governor Hancock, of Massachusetts. He was a great favorite with the General.

1776. Major Burr discovered that Miss Margaret Moncrieffe was a British spy. Under the guise of painting flowers, she had copied the whole plan of our fortresses and had sent them to General Howe. Major Burr discovered this, and although friendly to Miss Moncrieffe, showed his fidelity to his country by reporting the same to General Putnam. Miss Moncrieffe was at once removed from New York and sent to Kings Bridge.
1777. Major Aaron Burr was appointed lieutenant-colonel of Malcolm's regiment located at Ramapo, N. J., at that time being twenty-one years of age.
1777. In September, Colonel Burr led his soldiers to victory in the Battle of Paramus, N. J., distinguishing himself with great honor and capturing a large number of the British. It was the first engagement in which he was in sole command, and it was his first victory.
1777. While the Continental Army was encamped at Valley Forge, Colonel Burr was detailed to take command at "the Gulf"; while there a mutiny took place which was quickly suppressed by Colonel Burr.
1778. In the Battle of Monmouth Colonel Burr commanded a brigade. His horse was shot under him, and he was prostrated by the heat, which brought on the complaint which obliged him eventually to resign from the army on account of ill-health.

- 1778.** Colonel Burr was placed in charge of "The Lines" in Westchester County, in the State of New York, on the recommendation of Gen. Alexander McDougall. While there he suppressed the outrages of the Cowboys and Skinners and restored order, in which work his predecessors had failed, as did his successors.
- 1779.** He surprised and captured the British garrison of a block-house, and later drove back General Tryon, who contemplated a raid into Connecticut.
- 1779.** Colonel Burr, on March 10, resigned his position in the army on account of ill-health. At the request of General MacDougall he made his way through the enemies' lines and delivered a verbal message to General Washington.
- 1779.** While visiting some friends in New Haven, although in poor health, he still had the fire of American patriotism burning within him, and when the British arrived, July 5, he rallied the people of the neighborhood, and volunteered to take command against the British. He was then out of the army, his resignation having been accepted by the Commander-in-chief.
- 1780.** Burr resumed the study of law with Judge William Paterson, of Princeton, N. J., who later in life became Governor of the State. Burr was then twenty-four years of age.
- 1781.** In the spring he removed to Haverstraw,

- N. Y., and studied law with Thomas Smith, Esq. In the autumn he left Haverstraw for Albany, with a view of being admitted to the bar.
1782. He was admitted to the bar January 19, being nearly twenty-six years of age.
1782. On the 2d of July he was married to Mrs. Theodosia Prevost, of Paramus, N. J.
1783. In the autumn he removed from Albany to New York City, engaging in the practice of law.
1784. He was elected a member of the New York State Legislature.
1785. Mr. Burr was in the New York State Legislature when, on the 25th of February, a bill was pending for the gradual abolition of slavery within the State of New York. It provided that all negroes born after the date of its passage should be free men. Mr. Burr moved to amend that slavery should be entirely abolished. His amendment being lost, he voted for the bill as reported.
- 1785-1788. Mr. Burr remained out of politics, devoting his time to his legal practice, which was extensive and lucrative. The education of his daughter Theodosia, and the two sons of Mrs. Prevost Burr, was delightful employment for him during these years.
1789. Mr. Burr was appointed Attorney-General of the State of New York.
1791. The Hon. Aaron Burr took his seat as

**United States Senator on the 4th of March, being thirty-five years of age.**

- 1794. The Hon. Aaron Burr, while still Senator, was the choice of his party, in the United States Senate and House, as Ambassador to France. His wife, Mrs. Theodosia Prevost Burr, died in the spring of that year.**
- 1796. Hon. Aaron Burr, while Senator, received thirty electoral votes at the Presidential election, which resulted in the choice of John Adams as President, and Thomas Jefferson as Vice-President.**
- 1797. The Hon. Aaron Burr developed the Manhattan Banking Company.**
- 1798. The Hon. Aaron Burr, having finished his term of six years as United States Senator, was elected a member of the Assembly for the City and County of New York by the Democratic party.**
- 1799. The Hon. Aaron Burr fought a duel with John B. Church, at Hoboken, N. J., September 2, which was the outcome of erroneous statements made by Mr. Church relative to Colonel Burr. Neither was hurt, and the difference between them was harmoniously settled.**
- 1799. The Hon. Aaron Burr was again elected to the New York State Legislature, and supported the law of that year by which slavery was utterly abolished within the State of New York.**
- 1800. The Hon. Aaron Burr was elected Vice-president of the United States.**



1801. On the 4th of March the Hon. Aaron Burr became Vice-president of the United States and took his seat as President of the United States Senate.
1801. His daughter, Theodosia, was married to Colonel Joseph Alston, of Georgetown, S. C.
1802. His grandson, Aaron Burr Alston, was born June 29.
1804. The Hon. Aaron Burr was a candidate for the Governorship of the State of New York, but was defeated by the Hon. Morgan Lewis.
1804. The trouble between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton came to a climax in this year. The interchange of letters, which have become famous, took place between June 18 and July 3, and finally led up to the duel.
1804. Burr and Hamilton fought a duel at Weehawken, N. J., July 11. Hamilton was mortally wounded.
1805. The Hon. Aaron Burr presided, as President of the Senate, at the trial of Judge Samuel Chase, who was found not guilty of the charges made against him, March 1.
1805. Burr bade farewell to the United States Senate. Resolutions were passed expressing, in the most exalted terms, approval of his conduct as President of the Senate.
1805. Burr's acquaintance with the Blennerhassetts began in the month of December.
- 1805-1807. Burr's connection with the Mexican

project, or what is known as the South-western Conspiracy, took place in these years.

807. Burr was arrested in Alabama, February 19. He was placed on trial for high treason and misdemeanor. The trial was held at Richmond, August 5, before the Hon. Chief Justice John Marshall, and a verdict of "Not Guilty" was rendered September 1.
1808. The Hon. Aaron Burr sailed for Europe June 7.
- 1808-1812. The Hon. Aaron Burr was abroad in Europe, during which time he visited England, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Germany, and France, being received by the nobility and royalty, and making the acquaintance of many famous men and women, including the Princess Louise, who became the mother of Emperor William the First, of Germany.
1812. Burr returned to New York, via Boston, from Europe, June 8. He immediately engaged in the practice of law, in an office with Colonel Robert Troup, an old army friend.
1812. Burr's grandson, Aaron Burr Alston, died June 30, aged ten years.
1812. Burr's daughter, Mrs. Theodosia Alston, sailed from Georgetown, S. C., December 30, on the pilot boat *Patriot*, commanded by Captain Overstocks. The vessel failed to reach port.

1812. Burr opened an office for the practice of law in Nassau Street.
- 1812-1833. Burr devoted all his time to his legal practice. The Medcef-Eden case, which was dropped by Alexander Hamilton, occupied a great deal of his time. He reversed Mr. Hamilton's opinion and brought the case to a successful climax, restoring the property to the Misses Eden, who were the heiresses. While conducting the case, Colonel Burr personally attended to the education of the ladies, supplying them with funds whereby they could continue their studies until he had recovered their property.
1833. Hon. Aaron Burr was married to Madame Jumel on the 1st of July, being at that time seventy-seven years of age. In the same year he was stricken with a slight attack of paralysis.
1836. He was again attacked by the eventually fatal malady. Surrounded by many friends and relatives, he passed away at Mersereau's Ferry (now Port Richmond), Staten Island, New York, on Wednesday, September 14, aged eighty years, seven months, and eight days. He was buried at Princeton, N. J., on Friday, September 16, in the cemetery attached to the Princeton College grounds, near the graves of his honored grandfather, the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, and his father, the Rev. Aaron Burr.

## CHAPTER VIII


### MRS. THEODOSIA PREVOST BURR

**I**N the lives of Colonel Aaron Burr by Knapp, Davis, Parton, and Merwin, but little is told of the ancestors or immediate family of Mrs. Theodosia Prevost, who became his wife. Diligent search has, however, brought to light much authentic information in regard to her and her family which is now presented, in connected form, for the first time.

How unreliable the information given in histories and biographies has been may be seen from the fact that for a hundred years and more she has been represented as the wife of Gen. Augustine Prevost, when, in reality, she was the wife of his brother. But the consideration of that relationship, and its ending by the death of her husband, must be deferred, while we go back to the days when Wolfe defeated Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham.

Captain Peter Wraxall married Elizabeth Stillwell, December 9, 1756. He was in garrison at Fort Edward in 1757, when Fort William Henry was left to its fate by its commander, Webb, and its garrison suffered such atrocities. Captain Wraxall died July 11, 1759.

The pages of history now tell us who was Mrs. Wraxall's second husband (36):



John Maunsell, a soldier of Wolfe's, who reached the rank of Lieutenant-general, was a son of Richard Maunsell, of Limerick, M. P., from 1741-1761, and Jane, daughter of Richard Waller, Esq., of Castle Waller, County Tipperary, Ireland. His grandfather was Thomas, who married a daughter of Sir Theophilus Eaton. One of his brothers was the Rev. Wm. Maunsell, D. D. They were descended from a scion of the Maunsells of Bucks, who settled in Cork in 1609. The family had a branch in Glamorgan, who spelled the name without the u. They have a tomb in Westminster Abbey, in the north aisle near the transept. Among them were Sir Edward, of Margam, father of Thomas Lord Mansell, in the reign of Queen Ann; and William, Bishop of Bath and Wells. The name is pronounced by all according to the English spelling. It has always been distinguished in the church, the army, and the navy by eminent names.

General Maunsell espoused for his second wife Elizabeth Stillwell, widow of Captain Peter Wraxall, which the register of Trinity Church records under the date of June 11, 1763. She was of remarkable beauty, as her portrait, in the possession of the family of the late H. Maunsell Schieffelin, testifies; and she was one of "the six beautiful sisters," daughters of Richard Stillwell, of Shrewsbury, and Mercy Sands, among whom were Mrs. Clark, mother of the wife of Bishop Moore, and of Lady Affleck, the mother of Lady Holland, and Mrs. De Visme, mother of Theodosia, wife of Aaron Burr, who was the mother of Theodosia Burr Alston. Her first husband was a man of more than ordinary capacity and acquirements, and held a leading place in the affairs of the Province of New York, especially as the secretary for Indian affairs and the confidential friend and aide-de-camp of Sir William Johnson, a relation honorable to both — to Sir William as trusting this virtuous and upright man above the venal and debauched satellites around him, and to Captain Wraxall, as devoting his learning and ability to the difficult, dangerous, and disheartening labors of Johnson and the Indian tribes.


General Maunsell, at one time, reposed great confidence in Colonel Burr, but for some reason, not fully explained in a letter to his sister, changed his mind. His prognostication, in one respect, was correct, for Colonel Burr did not go to Con-

gress until he was elected United States Senator in 1791 (37).

A letter from the General, addressed to his sister "at the Rev. Mr. Benjamin Moore's, New York," dated "London, December 14, 1783," is interesting as showing his affectionate consideration, his knowledge of affairs, his prudence in counsel, and chiefly his admiration for Colonel Burr, who had recently married a niece of Mrs. Maunsell's — Theodosia, widow of Lieutenant-colonel Prevost of the British army; a sentiment which, it is needless to say, the honest veteran had occasion to change. "My dear sister," he wrote, "Mr. Burr will counsel you in all this. I bear a great character of him, and I think Theo was lucky in meeting so good a man. You may rest assured that my wife and myself are your sincerest and most disinterested friends, and your happiness shall be our first and only object. Consult Mr. Burr only, whose goodness will induce him to give you the best advice." After their return to New York in 1784, they made their home at 11 Broadway.

Major-general Maunsell was promoted Lieutenant-general October 12, 1793. He had been abroad the previous year, whence he sent a letter to his niece, Miss Watkins, so characteristic of the old soldier, with glints of Irish humor, irony, and banter, honest and sincere, and withal so changed in its estimate of Aaron Burr, that it deserves to be given in full:

"A thousand thanks for your letter of the 16th January, which came to my hands on the 16th February, accompanied by one from your aunt and one from Lyddy. I am to hope that your aunt is well, tho neither of you tell me so in your letters; Lyddy is quite silent respecting her. I hope she has not experienced any inconvenient cold from the severity of the winter. I really long to see you all more than you can imagine. Lyddy tells me that Mr. Burr expects a seat in Congress, and that he has taken *Big Symmon's* house in Wall Street. As I shall never more have any intercourse with him or his family, his changes in life give me no concern, or pleasure; he is no friend to your house. I rejoice that you and Lyddy find beaux to attend you, and that you mix with the gay and lively. Remember me to the Stoutons, Ten Eycks, Smiths, the Randalls — Miss in particular — Miss Ramsey Marshall, and our opposite Miss Sucky Marshall, and be sure to mention me always to my good friend General Gates and his lady.



I do not think that Mr. Burr will be sent to Congress. You will perceive that he will act just as he did respecting the Assembly; he declined in print — before he was chosen — a pritty mode of manifesting confidence in success which he was not sure of. Pity he had not hired apartments in *Big S's* paunch, which is large enough, than to have taken his house. I hope that a letter from Captain Drew will accompany this to Lyddy and me; I have written to him; no answer as yet. I have said all that occurs to me. I'll lay down my pen, first requesting you to make my most affectionate regards to all your house; don't forget Sam."

The strength of his character was shown in the lasting impress which he left on all with whom he was brought in contact. His name remained with them, and still remains with the descendants, a household word, and they never tired of repeating his sayings and his acts. Even his foibles were dear to them, as when they told how the veteran who faced the bullets and bayonets of the French and Spaniards, and the tomahawk and scalping knife of the savage, was so afraid of being choked by a fish bone that he would allow no one to speak to him while he was eating fish. His name, perpetuated in every generation since his death, testifies to the abiding veneration with which his memory is cherished.

Another glimpse into history introduces us to Colonel Roger Morris and the Jumel Mansion, which, for a short time, was the home of Colonel Burr (38).

Colonel Roger Morris was a handsome, magnetic man of the world, who, born and bred in England, had joined the army and had been sent to this country as the aide-de-camp of Braddock; he was with the latter on his unlucky expedition, and there he made the acquaintance of Washington. Later he was in service in the French war under Loudon, was in Wolfe's expedition against Quebec, was at the Battle of Sillery in 1760, and commanded the third battalion in the expedition against Montreal under General Murray. He married Mary Philipse. The house in which he lived was known as the Roger Morris Mansion, now called the Old Jumel Mansion.

Colonel Morris and his wife were not long without agreeable neighbors in their picturesque solitude. General John Maunsell, B. A., a

British officer of note, was married in 1763 to Elizabeth Stillwell, the young and beautiful widow of Captain Peter Wraxall, and purchased a fine tract of land adjoining the Morris estate, and built a substantial frame house, which is still standing (1889), in good repair, on the corner of 157th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue. Lydia Stillwell, a sister of Mrs. Maunsell, was the wife of John Watkins, who, not far from the same time, purchased a very extensive landed property near by.

The Stillwell sisters — daughters of Richard Stillwell, of New Jersey, of which there were six, inclusive of Mrs. Maunsell and Mrs. Watkins — were noted far and wide for their beauty and their accomplishments. One of them married Lord Affleck, and lived and died in a castle built by William the Conqueror; another married Mr. Clement Clark, who resided at Chelsea, as it was then called, near the foot of 23d Street and the Hudson, and her daughter became the wife of the celebrated Bishop Moore; another was Mrs. De Visme, the mother of the wife of Aaron Burr, and grandmother of the beautiful Theodosia; and still another, Mrs. Smith, was the mother of the wife of Dr. Samuel Bradhurst. This gentleman built the old Bradhurst mansion, a short distance to the South of the Watkins house, a notable landmark of the olden time, now standing (1889) in 148th Street between Tenth and St. Nicholas Avenue. The land about it and its site was a slice of the Watkins estate, as was also the site of "the Grange," a little farther south, the old historic home of Alexander Hamilton.

Miss Ann Stillwell married Theodosius Bartow for her first husband. Theodosia Bartow, her daughter, married James M. Prevost, an officer in the British Army. Mrs. Theodosius Bartow took for her second husband Philip De Visme, while Mrs. Theodosia Prevost, her daughter by her first husband, when widowed, became the wife of Colonel Aaron Burr. The Bartow house was located in Perth Amboy, New Jersey (39).

The next residence to the cottage of Madame Scribblerus in antiquity and interest is the venerable dwelling so well loved by all old Amboy residents as the abode of the Smith family, after whom Smith Street is named.



This old house has a large share of romantic interest in being the home of the queer and eccentric Thomas Bartow, a gentleman of wealth and culture, whose friendship for the youthful William Dunlap in the days before the Revolution is said to have laid the foundation of the artistic knowledge which eventually made him one of New York City's most famous theatrical managers and art critics.

Thomas Bartow at that time, just before the Revolution, was a very old man. Dunlap himself in after years described him as "a small, thin old man, with straight gray hair hanging in comely guise on each side of his pale face." Tradition says that owing to some mystery in connection with the wrong he had done a woman in youth, he lived in strict seclusion, no females but his relatives and a black woman as venerable as himself ever crossing his threshold. But perhaps his relatives made amends for the rest of the fair sex, for he had many and interesting ones. First of all in the white light of history stands his lovely niece, Theodosia Prevost, afterwards Mrs. Aaron Burr. She was the daughter of his brother Theodosius Bartow, who married Ann Stillwell. He was a lawyer and native of Shrewsbury, New Jersey, and it was there that the woman whose charm excelled that of every other member of her sex, according to Burr, passed her early youth, until she was wooed and won by Lieutenant-colonel Prevost, a relative of Lieutenant-general Sir George Prevost, Baronet. She must have often visited the old gentleman with her mother, Mrs. Philip De Visme, for he left her in his will "One hundred pounds in Spanish Mill'd dollars, at eight shillings each, for the use of her children," which was a large legacy.

An old resident of Perth Amboy is thus reminiscent (40):

In reading of the marriage of Aaron Burr to the daughter of Theodosius Bartow, of Shrewsbury, N. J., recalled a reminiscence. When from eight to ten years old, our home was midway between the residence of Mrs. Susan Parker, the aunt of the venerable Courtlandt Parker (the veteran lawyer of Newark), and the house of a Mr. Morris who was owner of a big hay press and wharves at Perth Amboy, from which New York received its pressed hay. We were then a boy of about eight years, and from our window could see a young man with his couch close to the open window of the Morris residence, almost constantly fanned during the summer season by the nurses in the Morris

home. We had seen him come to Amboy for his health, but he wasted away, despite all the care possible, from his anxious relatives, and was on his dying bed at last. Mrs. Susan Parker had extensive gardens and was an angel to all in distress, and she told us to call every morning and take a bunch of flowers (for they were not then called bouquets) to the sick man in the house of Mr. Morris. The little boy was glad of the duty, and the choicest of the garden productions were ready every day and went to the man whose life was so rapidly wasting away. He was the first dying person we had seen, and his emaciated frame, and painful smile with which he received the daily tokens of sympathy made a lasting impression upon the little messenger. But one morning the lad went silently in as usual and up to his room with the blooms for the bed of death. Startled at the awful scene, I quickly laid the flowers in their accustomed place, but the eyes of Theodosius Bartow could see them no more. We have no knowledge of what eventually became of the Morris people, but after my father's people moved upon the old homestead at Metuchen, the Morris family, who had no children of their own, sold the hay presses and wharves and moved away. But I was lately recalled to them by the fact that Mrs. Prevost's father was Theodosius Bartow, of Shrewsbury, N. J., and the same name suggests an inquiry as to what relationship, if any, existed between him and the Theodosius Bartow whose deathbed made such a lasting impression upon the writer of this paragraph over seventy years ago.

The death of Theodosius Bartow occurred shortly before the birth of his child, whom he wished named after him; being a girl, the feminine form of the name was adopted — Theodosia, "the gift of God." The fact has been noted in a previous chapter that Theodosia Burr, the Colonel's daughter, who often signed her name Theodosia B. (Bartow) Burr, was the only member of the Burr family who has ever borne the name of Theodosia.

In 1903, D. Appleton & Company, of New York, published a book entitled "The Stirrup Cup," written by J. Aubrey Tyson. The scene of the story is laid in Suffren and the surrounding Ramapo dis-

trict in New Jersey, and the story itself is an account of Colonel Burr's dramatic courtship, and marriage to Mrs. Theodosia Prevost.

The States, a newspaper published in New Orleans, in its issue of June 21, 1903, said: "D. Appleton & Company recently received a letter from J. Bogert Suffren, a grandson of the founder of Suffrens, Rockland County, New York, ordering a copy of "The Stirrup Cup." Mr. Suffren wrote:

I am led to send for this book because of the fact that Colonel Burr was in command of the American post at the Ramapo Valley, the remains of the intrenchments of which are in good preservation on my property at this place, and because of the further fact that the Colonel had his headquarters at the house of my great-grandfather, Judge John Suffren.

Madam Prevost at the time of the courtship resided in Hobokus, a station on the Erie Railroad, eight miles south of Judge Suffren's.

While stationed at Ramapo, Colonel Burr made a raid on a considerable body of British and Tories lying at Hackensack, N. J., which was quite successful, in doing which he passed the residence of Madam Prevost.

Madam Prevost's first husband, James Marc Prevost, was an officer in the British army, and in December, 1775, obtained a grant from the British authorities of 5000 acres, which covered a considerable portion of the town of Ramapo, including the now villages of Suffren and Hillburn. This grant, or a large portion of it, ultimately passed to the ownership of Dr. Elijah Rosencrants a few years after the war, and the property is still in the possession of his descendency.

Histories and biographies have contained, and some still contain the erroneous statement that Mrs. Theodosia Prevost was the wife of General Augustine Prevost. "He was born in Geneva, Switzerland, about 1725; was a British general in the Revolutionary War. He defeated the Americans at Brier Creek in 1779; was unsuccessful before

Charleston in 1779, but defended Savannah successfully in the same year. He died in England, May 5, 1786" (41).

It became evident, if Mrs. Prevost was married to Colonel Burr in 1782, that she had a husband living at the time. Investigations proved, however, that there had been a mistake made in the name, which had not been corrected for more than a century.

A letter addressed to General James Grant Wilson, one of the editors of Appleton's Cyclopædia of American Biography, in 1901, elicited the following reply:

"Herewith I hand you the desired data concerning Mrs. Prevost's first husband, who was a brother of General Augustine Prevost, and is believed to have died in Jamaica in 1779. My secretary, who looked up the information, suggests that you consult the Bartow Genealogy, should you desire further data of Burr's first wife. The home of his second wife, Madame Jumel, for some months General Washington's headquarters, has just been purchased by the city for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars."

General Wilson inclosed the following data:

Theodosia, Aaron Burr's first wife, was the daughter of Theodosius Bartow, of Shrewsbury, N. J., counsellor-at-law.

Her first husband was Jacques Marc (James Mark) Prevost, who was the brother of General Augustine Prevost, and who died in the West Indies in 1779 (according to Burke's Peerage).

James Mark Prevost was appointed Major (local rank in America) July 23, 1772; he was made Major in the British Army September 21, 1775. He went to the "60th (or Royal American) regiment of foot" September 13, 1773. He was in the second battalion of the regiment

in Antigua in 1776, and was transferred to the first battalion June 6, 1778. On August 29, 1777, he was made Lieutenant-colonel (local ranks in America). The first battalion was stationed in Jamaica from 1773 until after his name ceases to appear on the rolls.

The sketch in N. Y. Genealogical Record (2, 13, p. 27) gives the place of his birth as Geneva, Switzerland.

Burke's peerage gives the place and date of his death as 1779 in the West Indies. I could not verify this from the Annual Register for 1779, 1780, 1781. His name appears without change in the Army list for 1779, 1780, 1781. The date of his successor's (Peter Hunter) accession to the rank is given as October 20, 1781.

Colonel Burr's first acquaintance with Mrs. Prevost is thus accounted for by a well-known historian (42):

At Paramus, sixteen miles from where his regiment lay, lived, in modest elegance, a family by the name of Prevost, a branch of a family distinguished in the society and in the annals of England. Colonel Prevost was with his regiment in the West Indies, and at Paramus lived his wife, Theodosia Prevost, her sister, Miss De Visme, and their mother, Mrs. De Visme, and the two little sons of Colonel and Mrs. Prevost. The ladies were accomplished and intelligent; for a long time their house had been the centre of the most elegant society of the vicinity, and after the Revolution had begun, officers of rank in the American army still visited them. By the strict law of the State, they would have been compelled to withdraw to the British army, and some of the severer Whigs wished the law to be enforced in their case, as it had been in others. But these ladies, besides being beloved in the neighborhood, guarded their conduct with so much tact that no very serious opposition was made to their residence within the American lines. The sudden death of Colonel Prevost in the West Indies gave them at length the right to embrace either party in the great dispute. When Colonel Burr took the command in that part of the country, the Prevosts held their old position, and their house was a favorite resort of the American officers. It is not unlikely that his acquaintance with the family began on that night of terror when the British threatened to lay waste the country and the American militia attacked the farm fences. If so, the young soldier must have presented himself to the



“The Hermitage” at Paramus, New Jersey, the Residence of Mrs. Theodosia Prevost,  
who became the wife of Col. Aaron Burr.




ladies in the character that ladies love, that of a hero and protector; a protector from the ravages of troops who were there for the express purpose of plundering and destroying. Be that as it may, it is certain that about this time Mrs. Prevost and Colonel Burr conceived for each other a regard which rapidly warmed into an ardent passion.

The house occupied by Mrs. De Visme (formerly Bartow, *née* Stillwell) was called "The Hermitage" and sometimes "The Little Hermitage." In the description of it which follows (48), the mooted question as to where and by whom Colonel Burr and Mrs. Prevost were married is introduced. Much interesting testimony bearing upon this subject will be given later in this chapter.

The Hermitage was in Burr's time a small stone house. The end, as shown in the picture, was the only portion of the house then standing. The addition was constructed afterwards, but the old part remains substantially as it was in Burr's time. Here he came riding up the long driveway from the road to the house. A slave took his horse back to the barn, which was also of stone, and he entered the door seen in the picture. The house was old then. There is no record of the date of its construction, but that it was used as a meeting place for the Free Masons at some time appears certain. Masonic emblems are chiseled in stone in several places on the front side. They are fairly well preserved now, though the house is known to be over two hundred years old.

Near the main building, which is shown in the picture, was a much smaller structure, which was also of stone. When the records of the house begin, there was no known entrance to this building. It was apparently solid stone. Later, when the occupant was having some repairs made in the cellar, a secret passage to this small building was found. Upon opening it, a set of stairs which led up to a small room was discovered. Upon exploring the exterior, nothing of interest was found, but it is believed that this room was used as a storage place for the paraphernalia of the Masons who formerly met there. Some excavating may be done later about the northeast corner of the building to see if any records were placed under the cornerstone.





It has always been supposed that Colonel Burr and Mrs. Prevost were married in the Old Dutch Church at Paramus, which was standing long before the Revolution, and which was used as a hospital during the fighting which occurred about it. The building was erected in 1735 and was reconstructed in 1872. It saw hard service during the year 1776 and thereabouts. The entire commissary department of Washington's army was near it, and the sick and wounded were cared for within it. It bore the marks of bullets and cannon-balls, and the British committed some acts of vandalism which were, to say the least, inhuman. The records were destroyed by fire, so that it is impossible to determine whether Burr was really married there or not.

Mr. W. C. Rosencranz, present owner and occupant of the Hermitage, declares that Burr was not married in the church. He says that his grandmother was a young girl when some of those who were associates of Mrs. Prevost were women, and she used to tell him that the women told of the wedding ceremony in the parlor of the Hermitage. She told very minutely of the carriages and the guests, and one of the ladies was a bridesmaid, which would appear to confirm the story.

Circumstantial evidence appears to strengthen this conclusion. Mrs. Prevost was a communicant of the High English Church, and would not be likely to enter a Dutch Reformed Church if it was possible to avoid it, and Burr was the son of a Presbyterian minister, and while he had no particular likes or dislikes at that time, so far as known, it is highly probable that he would avoid a church wedding if possible. And it is also probable that they would not go several miles for a wedding when the house was ample for all requirements. But there are those who still adhere to the belief that the ceremony was performed in the church, and that the carriages were for the reception which followed the ceremony.

During a recent flood, another interesting relic was washed out of the bed of Hohokus creek, which flows just back of the barn belonging to the place. It is a French Buhr millstone. This stone is known to be nearly two hundred years old. It had been lost very many years, but was discovered by the bursting of an old dam during that freshet. In Burr's time it was grinding away and supplied the meal for the large family, with the slaves, which then occupied the Hermitage. Its mate is doing duty as a step-stone, and this one will be utilised by Mr. Rosencranz for the same purpose.

Next to the unfortunate Major André, Burr was the most interest-



Rear View of "The Hermitage" at Paramus, New Jersey (1861).



An old Dutch Tile, from "The Hermitage," Paramus, New Jersey.



ing figure in the war at that time. Even though he afterward became a national figure, his early dashes in New Jersey were never forgotten, and his brilliant sallies against small detachments of the enemy will always remain as touches of the dramatic to every lover of the heroic.

The military record of every man who was brave in the Revolutionary period is interesting, but when military glory is combined with a picturesque love affair, the individual acquires ever greater interest. All the world loves a lover, and the dashing cavaliers who ride through the ambuscades of scouting parties of the enemy to visit the homes of their sweethearts are more than ordinarily attractive; and, combined with all his other brilliant doings, that was exactly what the young Colonial colonel did. He not only made night rides through the lines of the enemy, but he violated other precedents by paying court to the charming widow of a British officer; and, what is more to the point, he married her, and so accomplished was she that Burr once said that he owed all his courtliness of manner, which was proverbial in his time, to her influence and direction.

From where Washington's army was encamped on the Palisades to the house was fully fifteen miles, yet the young colonel frequently made his way through the tangled woodlands and across the country literally thick with British soldiers, to this house, to remain a portion of the night and then dash back again. This was continued for no one knows how long, but old diaries and traditions which have descended in the neighborhood seem to indicate that it was several weeks. At one time, it is reported in a diary that has been preserved, he narrowly escaped capture, but that by dashing through a dense thicket and over some very broken and swampy ground, he managed to elude his pursuers and got safely within the American lines.

The entertainments which Widow Prevost gave for the young people of the neighborhood were elaborate. Her family was wealthy for those days and she had some money of her own. Nearby lived a family of La Rues, who were important in a social way, and the brilliancy of the gatherings was remarkable for the times. Records in diaries and other forms have descended to present residents of that section which tell of these functions. It was into such society as this that the brilliant and dashing young colonel was introduced, and when he afterward led the beautiful widow to the altar, it was conceded that no handsomer couple ever took the vows in that region.

The story which follows may be "interesting," but it has no foundation in fact. The transition from Federalism to Democracy — from Adams to Jefferson — was not dependent upon the birthplace of her first husband, or that he was a British soldier. Besides, the narrator must have forgotten that Theodosia Bartow was born in New Jersey, and was an "American" girl. Then, again, Mrs. Burr died in 1794, six years before Burr was voted for with Jefferson (43):

Many interesting tales are told of the courtship, which, though it won Burr a beautiful and accomplished wife, cost him the Presidency. It is said that when the election was pending in the House, and which resulted in Burr's defeat for the Presidency, a country member rose for information. When told that Burr was a very able man, and that he served his country well during the war, the questioner seemed pleased, but when informed that he married the widow of an English officer, he sagely remarked that a man who would do that when there were so many good American girls to be had, couldn't be much of an American, and declared his intention of voting against him. That vote was the one which defeated him.

Colonel Burr's biographer (44) thus refers to Mrs. Prevost's real or supposed political sympathies:

"She was an accomplished and intelligent lady. Her husband was with his regiment in the West Indies, where he died early in the Revolutionary War." (1779 was not *early* in the war, which began in 1775 and closed in 1781.) She had a sister (Miss De Visme) residing with her. Mrs. Prevost's son (Colonel Burr's stepson), the Hon. John Bartow Prevost, was Recorder of the City of New York, and subsequently District Judge of the United States Court for the District of Louisiana.

"The house of Mrs. Prevost (or, rather, Mrs. De Visme's) was the resort of the most accomplished officers in the American army when they were in the vicinity. She was highly respected by her neighbors and was visited by the most genteel people of the surrounding country.

"Her situation was one of great delicacy and constant apprehension. The wife of a British officer, connected with the adherents of the Crown, naturally became an object of political suspicion, notwithstanding great circumspection on her part. Under such circumstances, a strong sympathy was excited in her behalf. Yet there were those among the Whigs who were inclined to enforce the laws of the State against her, whereby she would be compelled to withdraw within the lines of the enemy."

Testimony is conflicting as to what course was actually taken by the Whigs. A resident of Ridgewood, New Jersey (Paramus or Hohokus forms part of Ridgewood), wrote on August 23, 1906: "Mrs. Prevost was chased out of this neighborhood over a year before she married Burr, and her property confiscated by the loyal element in Bergen County."

This, however, is not conclusive, for a New Jersey Court officer says: "I have read all through the doings of the secret action of the Council of Safety at Trenton, and found no mention of Mrs. Prevost as having been forced to leave the country for disloyalty or otherwise."

A letter from Colonel Robert Troup, of the Continental Army, to his brother officer, Colonel H. H. Hughes, shows that Colonel Troup considered her loyal to the American cause.

RARITAN, SOMERSET COUNTY, N. J.,

January 16, 1781.

Dear Friend:

Some time last November I wrote you a letter requesting your friendly influence in sending to Colonel Steel at Morristown some books of mine which Colonel Hay has in his custody. I need only now suggest to you the importance of these books in perfecting my present plans. I am persuaded you will take pleasure in gratifying my request.

I feel myself irresistibly impelled by a perfect confidence in the intimacy subsisting between us, to recommend to your kindest attention one of my female friends in distress. I mean Mrs. Prevost, who has been justly esteemed for her honor, virtue, and accomplishments. I doubt whether you have the happiness of a personal acquaintance with her, though it is more than probable you are not a stranger to her character. During the whole course of this war she has conducted herself in such a manner as proves her to possess an excellent understanding as well as a strong attachment to our righteous cause.

My character of this lady is drawn partly from my own knowledge of her and partly from the information of the most respectable Whigs in the State. Impressed with those sentiments, I am not ashamed to confess that I feel an anxiety for her welfare, which you will more easily conceive than I can describe. It is true that she is the wife of an enemy. What then? Must we abandon human nature in order to manifest our patriotism? In our opposition to the tyrant of Britain and his mercenary instruments, is it necessary that we should commence hostility against innocent women and children? General Whigism, which has humanity for its basis, blushes at such disgraceful ideas.

I know you too well to believe that the part you have acted in this controversy is tinctured even in the smallest degree with interested motives. A man of this cast of mind will enjoy an exquisite pleasure in softening the misfortunes of his fellow creatures, notwithstanding they may be his enemies in a political view. This pleasure will be heightened when he can extend a helping hand to the fair sex who have every possible claim to his favor. Without the least deviation from truth, I can affirm that Mrs. Prevost is a sincere and cordial well-wisher to the success of our army, which will be an additional reason with you for showing her all the civilities in your power. Whatever the tongue of malice may circulate to the contrary, you may rest

satisfied that the sole cause of her leaving this State and going to Sharon was the seizure of her estate in consequence of an act of Assembly which some suppose extended to her husband, though a British subject. Not a single syllable has been lisped to her prejudice by those who are most desirous of (lightening) the weight of her afflictions.

To any other person but you I should deem it prudent to apologize for thus advocating the cause of a British officer's wife. But an apology would be an insult to your feelings. You cannot entertain a suspicion of my enthusiastic attachment to the public weal. When I desire to do anything to injure it, unless from an error in judgment, may I be despised by mankind as much as I shall be hated by myself. An anxious concern to alleviate the distress of an amiable and elegant lady, with whom I have long been on the most intimate friendly footing, gave birth to this letter. "He deserves not to exist who lives only for himself," has always been my motto.

In my last letter I advised Myles to prosecute his studies in the law. There will certainly be prospects opening for young fellows in New York after the end of the war. Pray chat with him once more on the subject and assure him of my affection for him. Remember me to all of my New York friends, and believe me, with as much sincerity as ever,

Your friend,

ROB TROUP.

An old-time resident of Paterson, N. J., in a lecture delivered before the Rambling Club of that city, said (45):

"So great was the danger to the American cause, the property of Colonel Prevost was confiscated, which was a cruel outrage, for he was not here at the time, but in the West Indies with his regiment, and was never fighting against the Colonies, and with neither justice nor right could the property of a British subject be confiscated under the circumstances. His widow, in her distress because of the seizure of her estate, and her anxiety to recover it, went for a time to Sharon, but she was



never, as has been falsely asserted, forced to leave the neighborhood of Paramus from being suspected of sympathizing with the Royalists. . . . Colonel Burr was, perhaps, too high-spirited to continue the contest for property belonging to her former husband."

An interesting account is given of an interview between Mrs. Prevost and Mrs. Benedict Arnold, on the authority of Colonel Burr's biographer (44):

In the summer of 1780, Major André, of the British army, was in correspondence with Mrs. Arnold (the wife of General Arnold) under a pretext of supplying her, from the City of New York, with millinery and other trifling articles of dress. On the 23d of September, 1780, Major André was captured, and the treason of the general discovered. When this news reached West Point, Mrs. Arnold became, apparently, almost frantic. Her situation excited the sympathy of some of the most distinguished officers in the American army. Mrs. Arnold, having obtained from General Washington a passport and permission to join her husband in the City of New York, left West Point, and on her way stopped at the house of Mrs. Prevost, in Paramus, where she stayed one night. On her arrival at Paramus, she renewed the frantic scenes of West Point, and continued so long as strangers were present. Mrs. Prevost was known as the wife of a British officer, and connected with the Royalists. In her, therefore, Mrs. Arnold could confide.

As soon as they were left alone, Mrs. Arnold became tranquilized and assured Mrs. Prevost that she was heartily sick of the theatrics she was exhibiting. She stated that she had corresponded with the British commander; that she was disgusted with the American cause and those who had the management of public affairs -- and that, through great persuasion and unceasing perseverance, she had ultimately brought the general into an arrangement to surrender West Point to the British. Mrs. Arnold was a gay, accomplished, artful, and extravagant woman. There is no doubt, therefore, that for the purpose of acquiring the means of gratifying her inordinate vanity, she contributed greatly to the utter ruin of her husband, and thus doomed to everlasting infamy and disgrace all the fame he had acquired as a gallant soldier at the sacrifice of his blood. Mrs. Prevost subsequently became the wife of Colonel Burr, and repeated to him these confessions of Mrs. Arnold.

The preceding statement is confirmed by the following anecdote: Mrs. Arnold was the daughter of Chief Justice Shippen, of Pennsylvania. She was personally acquainted with Major André, and, it is believed, corresponded with him previous to her marriage. In the year 1779-80, Colonel Robert Morris resided at Springatsbury, in the vicinity of Philadelphia, adjoining Bush Hill. Some time previous to Arnold's taking command of West Point he was an applicant for the post. On a particular occasion Mrs. Arnold was dining at the house of Colonel Morris. After dinner, a friend of the family came in, and congratulated Mrs. Arnold on a report that her husband was appointed to a different but more honorable command. The information affected her so much as to produce hysteric fits. Efforts were made to convince her that the general had been selected for a preferable station. These explanations, however, to the astonishment of all present, produced no effect. But, after the treason of Arnold was discovered, the family of Colonel Morris entertained no doubt that Mrs. Arnold was privy to, if not the negotiator for, a surrender of West Point to the British even before the general had charge of the post.

The author of a "Life of Aaron Burr" thus refers to Mrs. Prevost (46):

"Mrs. Prevost is described as attractive, but not beautiful, well educated, literary in her tastes, and possessed of charming manners. She was older than Burr, and of a delicate constitution. Her disposition was gentle and affectionate. Many years after her death, Burr spoke of her as 'the best woman and the finest lady that he had ever known.' Burr's letters to her, from first to last, express a deep affection in terms which have the ring of sincerity."

The author of the preceding refers to Colonel Burr as "Major," and says that Miss De Visme and her mother were of "Swiss birth." Colonel Prevost was born in Geneva, and Mr. De Visme may have been born in Switzerland, but Mrs. De

Visme (Ann Stillwell) was born in New Jersey, as were her daughters, Mrs. Prevost and Miss De Visme, her half-sister.


Many readable accounts have been written of the courtship of the Widow Prevost by Colonel Burr. One of the most complete and interesting is by a correspondent of a New York paper (47):

Hobokus, N. J., Sept. 26, 1902. — Colonel Burr wooed and won his bride in Hopperstown. Hopperstown was the name that Hobokus bore in Revolutionary times.

The old Hoboken and Albany post road which runs through here was the only route from New York to Albany on the west side of the Hudson River. In the winter the road on the east was abandoned for general travel and the one on the west side used altogether, for the reason that it was more apt to be open. Snow blocked the other road. The Holland Dutch settled the road thickly enough to keep it clear of obstructions from Hoboken up as far as the Ramapo Mountains. The mountains on either side protected the road through the Ramapo Valley.

Colonel Burr was the autocrat of the post road for a time. When George Washington moved from the scene of the battle of Trenton to Newburgh, on the Hudson, he halted a number of times. For seven weeks he tarried with his forces two and one-half miles from the village of Mahwah, which is six and one half miles above Hobokus. The tents were pitched on land, which is now part of Mountainside farm, belonging to Theodore A. Havemeyer, of New York. A fence encloses the old camp ground, which comprises seventy-five acres. At the back of it is Mr. Havemeyer's mammoth barn. In the centre of the field is a spreading yellow pine. The tree is over two hundred years old.

Under this tree was pitched the tent of the commandant. It was the only official headquarters on the camp ground. Andrew Hopper, one of the Holland Dutch settlers, owned all the country for miles around, and in his house Washington took up his quarters, and here he wrote all his letters, beginning "Headquarters, Bergen County." Part of the Hopper house, as it was designated, is preserved in the south wing of Mr. Havemeyer's modern mansion. The end wall is




is plain sight, although covered with cement to hold it intact. Before going to Virginia, General Washington presented a dinner set to Mr. Hopper. The set descended to Andrew Hopper Hagerman, who is now living in Rahway. He gave it to the Hon. S. Hewitt, who in turn sent it to the Washington headquarters at Newburgh.

Suffern's Clove was the name given the narrow rocky pass affording the only entrance to the Ramapo Valley. When General Washington reached it, his practised eye told him that it was important vantage ground. A handful of men at this point could keep back an army. To the northeast, General Washington beheld a towering mountain with a huge rocky dome, which overlooked everything. He clambered to the top of it and swept the country with his glass. New York Harbor was revealed to him. He was able to distinguish the strength of the British fleet and obtain a valuable observation. The mountain is called the Torne. Its top is 750 feet above the post road, and 1,067 feet above the sea.

The regiment known as Malcolm's was stationed in the Clove to guard the route to Newburgh. The year was 1777, and Burr, who had just been appointed Lieutenant-colonel, was left in command of the force. Earthworks were thrown up across the pass, and cannon were mounted on top of them. A portion of the old works still remains. Trees are growing on top of them. When the Erie Railway was built, an opening was cut through the works for its tracks. Besides being in a position to beat back the British if they should attempt to follow General Washington, Colonel Burr performed the duty of securing from intrusion an important undertaking. A few miles back in the mountains were the Sterling iron mines. They derived their name from the fact that they were originally owned by Lord Sterling, who obtained a grant of an enormous tract of land under royal letters. The ore was taken out of the mines for the great chain which was constructed to stretch across the Hudson River at West Point and obstruct the passage of British war ships. Some of the old furnace where the ore was reduced to iron is still standing near Sterling Lake. It was built against the side of a hill. What is left looks like a stone wall covered with iron rust. Cannon-balls were cast here, and now and then one is uncovered.

The links for the chain were fashioned at a forge about eight miles above the Clove. One of the end walls of the forge yet remains in an upright position. Ivy thickly overgrows it. It is a short distance above



Lorillard's station, and the Erie Railway's tracks run within a few feet of it. The shop was directly on the bank of the Ramapo River. There was a spy in Colonel Burr's lines. It was a noted Tory named Claudius Smith. He supplied British reconnoitering parties with horses and information. He had a cove in the mountain side across the river from the forge. It was a deep indentation in the rocks. A thick growth hides it now and it is almost impossible to reach it. Smith was caught and hanged for his work.

Mrs. Philip De Visme lived in the Hermitage at Hopperstown. The house was a fine one. It set back from the post road and was surrounded by trees. It was built of the red sandstone underlying the country. The present owner of the place is Mr. Elijah Rosencrantz. He built a new part on, and the old part serves as a wing. The new part was, however, made to conform to the old, and the whole is a picture of the Tudor style of architecture. The roofs are peaked, and many of the windows are diamond shaped. Mr. Rosencrantz's name for the place is Waldwick, "a light in the woods."

With Mrs. De Visme lived a daughter who was always alluded to as "the Widow Prevost." She was a charming woman, and the Hermitage was visited by all the beaux. British as well as American officers were guests at different times. Such social gayety did not prevail anywhere in this region. The Widow Prevost's name was Theodosia Prevost. Her husband was Colonel Prevost of the British Army. He died in the West Indies.

Colonel Burr came down from Suffern's Clove to a social event at the Hermitage, and was presented to the widow. He became an admirer of hers at once, and the more he saw of her the more he liked her. It is known that Burr might have formed an alliance with a powerful family, but he threw aside this opportunity to woo the widow. She charmed all she came in contact with. James Monroe began a letter to her "My Dear Little Friend," and Judge William Paterson, with whom Burr began his law studies, in a letter to the latter spoke of her as "a good gentlewoman."

The Hohokus Creek courses through a ravine at the termination of which was the cluster of houses called Hopperstown. On the north side of the Creek lived a man named Hopper, from whom the place received its name. The house is still standing. The wooden part, consisting of a story and a half, rests on high stone walls. A piazza extends along the front and is reached by broad steps. On the opposite



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side of the Creek was the Zabriskie house. This was a tavern. The British encamped at Hackensack heard that Hopperstown was a stronghold of patriots, and came up to destroy it. Word of their coming was received. There was a young American officer sick in the Zabriskie house. Three young ladies, who were belles in the neighborhood, undertook to save him. When the British were coming up the road they bore, with their own hands, a feather bed from the Zabriskie house to the Hopper house across the creek. Behind it was the American officer, who in that way was conducted to a place of safety. The Zabriskie house, being a tavern and a public place, was burned, but the rest of the place was spared. Colonel Burr was informed of the invasion. Down from the Clove he clattered at the head of a troop, anxious to display his valor before the Widow Prevost. The British had started back for Hackensack. He pursued them, but no engagement took place, although when almost in their stronghold a few shots were exchanged.

The year 1779 found Colonel Burr in command of the Westchester lines, with headquarters at White Plains, eight miles east of the Hudson River. One dark night he detailed six trusty troopers to have ready at Sunnyside (afterward the home of Washington Irving) a large barge full of blankets and skins. At eight o'clock he left his camp and galloped to the river. He led his horse into the barge, threw it, and bound it. The barge was pulled to the west shore, where Colonel Burr released his horse, threw himself on its back, and spurred it thirteen miles through the darkness to the home of the fair widow. He reached the Hermitage at midnight, remaining until two in the morning, when he started back as he came. The entire distance was beset with danger, but Colonel Burr made the trip once more, if not twice.

On July 2, 1782, Colonel Burr took the Widow Prevost to be his wife. The nuptials were celebrated in the Paramus (it was then spelled Pyramus) church, two miles from Hopperstown, in the valley. The church was a stone affair, octagonal in form. The steeple ran up from the center of the roof, and the pulpit was in the center of the church. There were no pews in the meeting house. The people had chairs, the ownership of which they determined by having their names written on them. When there was preaching, the congregation all pulled up close around the pulpit and listened to what the dominie said. There was preaching in Pyramus in 1725, but the church in which Colonel Burr was married was not built until 1735. For a time the

church was used by the British as a prison in which to keep Colonial captives. The present edifice, a square stone structure, was built in 1800 and remodelled in 1872. In the church-yard are graves so old that no idea of the time of burial can be obtained by any records or signs of existence. For the first burials there were no inscriptions to tell who reposed in the yard. Flat stones picked up in the fields were used to mark the graves. Subsequently, the names and ages were carved on the stones.

One of America's most noted poets took for a subject the midnight ride of Colonel Burr to visit his sweetheart at the Hermitage. The poem is entitled (48):

#### AARON BURR'S WOOING <sup>1</sup>

From the commandant's quarters on Westchester Height  
The blue hills of Ramapo lie in full sight;  
On their slope gleam the gables that shield his heart's queen,  
But the redcoats are wary — the Hudson's between.  
Through the camp runs a jest, "There's no moon, 'twill be dark, —  
'Tis odds little Aaron will go on a spark," —  
And the toast of the troopers is, "Pickets, lie low,  
And good luck to the Colonel and Widow Prevost!

Eight miles to the river he gallops his steed,  
Lays him bound in the barge, bids his escort make speed,  
Loose their swords, sit athwart, through the fleet reach yon shore:  
Not a word! not a splash of the thick-muffled oar!  
Once across, once again in the seat, and away —  
Five leagues are soon over when love has the say;  
And "Old Put" and his rider a bridle-path know  
To the Hermitage Manor of Madame Prevost.

Lightly done! but he halts in the grove's deepest glade,  
Ties his horse to a birch, trims his cue, slings his blade,  
Wipes the dust and the dew from his smooth handsome face

<sup>1</sup> From Harper's Magazine, Copyright 1887, by Harper & Brothers. By Permission.



The Dutch Reformed Church at Paramus, New Jersey, where Col. Burr and Mrs. Prevost are reported to have been married.







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With the kerchief she broidered and bordered in lace;  
Then slips through the box-rows and taps at the hall,  
Sees the glint of a wax-light, a hand white and small,  
And the door is unbarred by herself all aglow —  
Half in smiles, half in tears — Theodosia Prevost.

Alack, for the soldier that's buried and gone!  
What's a volley above him, a wreath on his stone,  
Compared with sweet life and a wife for one's view  
Like this dame ripe and warm in her India fichu?  
She chides her bold lover, yet holds him more dear,  
For the daring that brings him a night-rider here:  
British gallants by day through her doors come and go,  
But a Yankee's the winner of Theo Prevost.

Where's the widow or maid with a mouth to be kist,  
When Burr comes a-wooing, that long would resist?  
Lights and wine on the beaufet, the shutters all fast,  
And "Old Put" stamps in vain till an hour has flown past —  
But an hour, for eight leagues must be covered ere day:  
Laughs Aaron, "Let Washington frown as he may,  
When he hears of me next in a raid on the foe  
He'll forgive this night's tryst with the Widow Prevost!"

Colonel Burr, evidently, did not confide in all his friends and tell them the real object of his visits to the Hermitage.

Colonel Troup wrote him, in 1780 (49): "The Miss Livingstons have inquired about you in a very friendly manner, and since I have been with them I have had an opportunity of removing the suspicion they had of your courting Miss De Visme. They believe nothing of it now, and attribute your visits to the Hermitage to motives of friendship for Mrs. Prevost and the family. Wherever I am, and can with propriety, you may be sure I shall represent the matter in its true light."

Colonel Burr's courtship was not unknown to Judge Paterson, for he wrote to him, on the 18th of March, 1779 (50):

My dear Burr:

I came to this place yesterday in the afternoon, and regret extremely that I did not arrive earlier in the day, as I should have received your letter. My stay here will be uncertain. At home I must be by the beginning of April. I should be happy in seeing you before my return, but how to effect it is the question. If I could possibly disengage myself from business, I would take a ride to Paramus. My best respects await on Mrs. Prevost, and everything you think proper to the mistress of your affections.

I am married, Burr, and happy. May you be equally so. I cannot form a higher or a better wish. You know I should rejoice to meet you. Tell Mrs. Prevost that I shall take it unkindly if she does not call upon me whenever she thinks I can be of any service to her. To oblige her will give me pleasure for her own sake, and double pleasure for yours. This is a strange, unconnected scrawl; you have it as it comes.

I congratulate you on your return to civil life, for which (I cannot forbear the thought) we must thank a certain lady not far from Paramus. May I have occasion soon to thank you both in the course of the next moon for being in my line: I mean the married. Adieu.

I am most sincerely yours,

WILLIAM PATERSON.

Colonel Burr and Mrs. Prevost were married on July 2, 1782. At that time Colonel Burr was in his twenty-seventh year, Mrs. Prevost being thirty-six, or ten years his senior.

Mr. Charles Burr Todd, who compiled the genealogy of the Burr family (51), says that the marriage took place in the Dutch Reformed Church at Paramus, the Rev. Mr. David Bogert, pastor of the church, performing the ceremony.

This statement would, at first glance, seem author-



Gov. William Paterson of New Jersey.




itative, but careful investigation discloses seeming inconsistencies.

The following review appeared in a New York paper in 1903 (52):

The Rev. Edward Tanjore Corwin, of New Brunswick, N. J., has issued a fourth edition of his "Manual of the Reformed Church in America, 1623-1902," after a lapse of 23 years since the third was issued. The book is in three parts and an appendix, an octavo of 1,100 pages in all; it has the distinction that no other denomination possesses such a work. It gives a full general history of what used to be called the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in America, including biographies, bibliographies, local church history, and chronological tables. There are chapters on foreign missions, with more than 200 zealous proselytizers, on the Young People's Societies, the Alliance of Reformed Churches, and other kindred topics. Part II, over 630 pages, gives the names of all who have ever officiated in this church in America during its 275 years of existence, with biographical data whenever obtainable; included in this list are some scores of names of converted heathen. Part III treats of the churches, gives the names of all that ever belonged to this body, the pastorates of each, with reference to the local histories. The appendix shows what part the various educational institutions had in training the ministers.

One of the men famous in church annals noted here is Cornelius Van Dyck, 1818-95, who translated the Bible into Arabic; another is Guido Verbeck, 1830-98, who did the same for Japan. The book will be of value in reference libraries for church historians and people who write for boys of deeds of every-day heroism and long-spun bravery, besides its original use as a history of this particular church.

Mr. Corwin's "Manual" states that Benjamin Vanderlinde was pastor of the church at Paramus from 1748 to 1789, Gerardus A. Kuypers being his colleague from 1786 to 1789. Isaac Blauvelt succeeded Mr. Vanderlinde in 1790. The pastors were not called "Reverend" but simply "Mister." Mr. Edward Tanjore Corwin became the pastor in 1857.



David Schuyler Bogart was born in New York City in 1770. Was missionary along the Hudson, and to the North as far as St. Croix in 1792. In Albany, as an assistant, 1792-6. South Hampton, Long Island (Presbyterian), 1796-1806. Bloomingdale, 1806-7. South Hampton again, 1807-1813. Success and Oyster Bay, 1813-1826. He died in 1839 (53).

The pastor of the Paramus church in 1902, Mr. W. H. Vroom, stated that "There has been no other Bogart in our ministry, and no Bogert until the nineteenth century." Mr. David S. Bogart could not have been more than twelve years of age at the time of Colonel Burr's marriage. It seems from the preceding to be conclusively proven that the marriage was not solemnized by a Mr. Bogart.

A private letter supplies some additional information (54):

Your note in regard to the marriage of Aaron Burr is received. I was pastor at Paramus from 1857-63, and often visited the old stone house, very large, of Elijah Rosencrantz, about an eighth or a quarter of a mile northeast of the Hohokus station on the Erie Railroad. This is less than two miles from the Paramus church, which is southeast of Hohokus. Mr. Rosencrantz was a man of fine intelligence, and he frequently referred to the fact that Aaron Burr was married in his house. The father of Mr. Rosencrantz was Elijah Rosegrant (so the name is spelled on his tombstone in the Paramus churchyard) and was born in 1766. He was a graduate of Queens (now Rutgers) College in this city in 1791, and studied theology under Dr. John H. Livingston, and was licensed to preach in 1794 by the Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church; but he turned his attention at once to medicine, and lived and died at Paramus or Hohokus. His death occurred in 1832. He was, therefore, but a little removed from being contemporary with the time of that marriage; so the tradition could hardly be wrong. I do not know, but I have always taken it for granted, that



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this Dr. Rosegrant lived in the same house. It is a fine old place. A half a century ago the tradition was never questioned in that locality.

The pastor of Paramus church in 1782 was Benjamin Vanderinde (his pastorate extended from 1748-89), but he could, probably, not speak English, and there was no minister in the Dutch Church in 1782 by the name of Bogart. Bogardus is the Latinized form of Bogart, but there was no minister of that name, in 1782, in the Dutch Church. I think that Aaron Burr would have taken a minister with him from New York or elsewhere. I have never seen a reference to a minister by the name of Bogart in that decade, 1781-90. There were, however, scores of Bogarts in Bergen County, N. J., at that time. I think you may rest assured that the marriage did not take place in the Paramus church building. I never heard that statement in that neighborhood. Colonel Burr might have been married by a Justice of the Peace by the name of Bogart. Such marriages were common in New Jersey.

From many letters received in response to inquiries, the following conflicting replies are culled:

"On consideration and information, I feel convinced that the marriage occurred at the *home*, for neither Burr nor the widow would have been anxious to make an unnecessary show of themselves by going to a church to be married. Besides, only one marriage that I know of ever occurred in that church. It was opposed to Dutch Church customs, and all about there were old Amsterdam and Rotterdam Dutch people, of pride and affluence."

"There is no evidence that the Widow Prevost was a member of the Old Dutch Church at Paramus, or that she or any of her family were buried there. As Colonel Burr, before his death, was attended by a pastor of that church, I have thought it possible that Mrs. Prevost might have been a member at some time during her life."

"That marriage in the church story has been



told to me by a dozen or twenty old residents of Paramus Valley, fifty years ago, and I never before heard it disputed or questioned. I was born at Perth Amboy in 1825 and am in my eighty-first year."

"A record of the marriage of Mrs. Prevost to the Hon. Aaron Burr, *July 4, 1782*, can be found at the county seat, Hackensack, N. J. It is in the New Jersey Archives, Bergen County, Volume XXII, page 39, 1st Series."

"The church in which Aaron Burr was married has stood 170 years. The first marriage ceremony solemnized within its walls since then (Colonel Burr's) took place last week, when Miss Blanche Miller and Dr. W. L. Vroom were united. It was the first marriage in the church for 113 years."

"As to the wedding, the old people here insist that it was in the church."

"The Rev. Benjamin Vanderlinde was stated minister from 1748 to 1788, when the Rev. Gerardus A. Kuypers was called, but it might have been some other minister that married them. He (Colonel Burr) was married in the old Paramus church, and the Widow Prevost lived in the old Rosencrantz place at Hohokus, and the church book gives no name of either Bogart or Bogardus, and that is all I can tell you about it. There may be some one who knows more about them than I do, but it is a certain fact that they were married in the old church at Paramus." (Paramus, N. J., June 13, 1906.)

"As to *where* Colonel Burr was married, the more I look into the subject, the more convinced I am that it was not in the Paramus church. It is susceptible of proof that Mrs. Prevost left the Hermitage and its vicinity for more than a year prior to the date of the marriage, and Parton does not say in his "Life of Burr" that Burr was married in the Paramus church."

The author of "The Burr Family," in a letter to Mr. F. J. Walton, of Ridgewood, N. J., a gentleman who makes a specialty of New Jersey collections, wrote: "After twenty-four years it is a little difficult for me to give authority. I went to Paramus, saw the dominie, and records, and talked with old men. I must have got it from some of these."

"Burr was married July 2, 1782, and, of course, *somewhere*, but not at, not in, Paramus, Bergen County, N. J. I have given this seemingly unimportant item ample research, and hope this part of historic fiction will not be further perpetuated."

"In the spring of 1782, Burr was in Albany, deeply engrossed in matters legal, and the widow had left this locality for good and all over a year previous. Just why they should take a long and tedious journey to be married at Paramus is beyond my comprehension. There were plenty of dominies near at hand."

"In reply to your query of October 14, 1903, I would say that there are no marriage records known to be extant of the Old Dutch Church at Paramus,

prior to 1799. Volume XXII of the New Jersey Archives gives copies of the marriage records of that church for 1799 and 1800.

“Local tradition is to the effect that Colonel Burr married Mrs. Theodosia Prevost in the church which was then standing on the site occupied by the present edifice. Mrs. Prevost lived within a mile or two of the church, and it would seem very probable that the marriage took place in that neighborhood, if not in the church itself. I am under the impression myself that church weddings were not usual in those days among the Dutch people. I presume Mrs. Prevost, as the daughter of a Church of England man, and the widow of another, would have preferred to be married by a Church of England minister, but I do not think there was any such clergyman available at that time within thirty miles of Paramus, and it was, therefore, very natural that she should be married by the local clergyman. I do not at this moment recollect who was the pastor of the Paramus church in 1782, the date of their marriage, but that can be easily ascertained by reference to Corwin's Manual.

“I presume you saw in Goodspeed's catalogue, last week, a notice of the letter of Mrs. Prevost Burr relating to her wedding. Unfortunately, she gives no details of the marriage ceremony itself as regards the place where the wedding ceremony was celebrated, nor the clergyman who officiated. I think the document in question is the original draft of her letter to Mrs. Sally Burr Reeve (55).”

The letter referred to as being sent by Mrs.

Colonel Burr to Mrs. Reeve was written some time in July, 1782. From it we learn that the bridal pair went by sloop up the Hudson to Albany, but the point of departure is not given.

A letter of date June 3, 1904, to the Town Clerk of Litchfield, Conn., elicited the following reply: "After carefully searching the records of Litchfield, I fail to find the marriage of Mrs. Prevost to Colonel Burr a part of same."

Here is a modern appreciation of Burr in his home life (56):

Burr, with all his reputation for gallantry, had little admiration for beauty in women without cleverness, and he was much inclined to an appreciation of even Stoicism in the female character.

He would send to Mrs. Burr the most charming little letters, written in the spirit of a husband who aims to have his wife worthy of companionship in their choicest mental pleasure. . . . He would bid her not to be discouraged over the complaint that she had made about her memory, and not to expect it to retain with accuracy and certainty all names and events. Whatever Aaron Burr may have been before his marriage, or whatever he may have become in after years, his conduct at this period of his life, both as husband and father, displayed in a more than ordinary degree a capacity for enjoying the felicities of a virtuous household. . . . Nor was the Widow Prevost, whom Aaron Burr married, an ordinary woman. She was his senior by ten years: she was hardly a beauty, and there was a scar upon her face, but it was her fine feminine manner and her elegance of deportment that brought to her feet the foremost of all the men of his time in the power to captivate her sex. She passed away when she was still in the noon-tide of her years, but Burr ever revered her memory as that of "the best woman and finest lady" he had ever known, or as "the mother of my Theo," and in Theodosia's mind and person, indeed, were some of the best qualities of the splendid stocks from which she sprang.

It was these qualities that first caused men to doubt whether Burr could have been altogether the man of abhorrent character painted by his contemporaries, when such a daughter was his worshiper. They

induced James Parton to revise, or soften, the harsh opinion which history had passed upon him, and American women of patriotic societies, who in late years have been studying the character of this beautiful woman, have not infrequently been led to look upon her brilliant but dishonored father with something of the sense of pity.

In sharp contrast to the preceding was an article which appeared in a Western newspaper (57). The following letter which was sent to the editor did not receive a reply:

I have received a clipping from your issue of August 2, 1903, in which I find the following paragraph: "Burr cherished an enthusiastic devotion for his wife, to whom he was chronically faithless, and for his daughter Theodosia, who perished at sea. But he never loved nor trusted anybody else. He had no respect for the virtue of a woman. He never remembered nor repaid a kindness. Except as to his regard for his family, his moral character was without a redeeming trait."

As you will see by the enclosed circular letter, I am engaged in writing a "Life of Colonel Aaron Burr." If you will kindly read the small slip, also inclosed, you will find that my object is to learn the truth about Colonel Burr. When I do learn it, I shall print it.

It is to be presumed that the editor of so influential a paper would not make statements like those quoted above, unless he possessed some good authority for doing so. You say that Burr was "chronically faithless" to his wife. In my researches relating to the life and character of Colonel Burr, which have covered a period of fully twenty-two years, I have never met this statement before; on the contrary, I have a great many references, the tenor of which is exactly opposite to your declaration. Judge John Greenwood, in a paper read before the Long Island Historical Society, in September, 1863, said: "His life with Mrs. Prevost (who died before I went into his office) was of a most affectionate character, and his fidelity never questioned. There is another thing that will add to his credit, he was always a gentleman in his language and deportment."

In another part of his address, the Judge said: "There are some who suppose that Colonel Burr had no virtues. This is a mistake. He was true in his friendships and would go any length to serve a friend, and he had always the strongest affections."

I could quote many other such references, but this one will suffice for my purpose. As I said, I am desirous of learning the truth. If you have in your possession any reliable information to prove the correctness of your assertions, or can refer me to anyone who can supply me with such proof, I shall be greatly obliged for the same.

It has been said that Burr did not marry for beauty; it is also certain that he did not marry wealth, or to gain political prestige by a matrimonial alliance with one of the ruling families in New York, as Alexander Hamilton is said to have done when he became a member of the Schuyler family. Mr. Vanderhoven says (45):

It was not the marriage of a cold and selfish schemer with an eye only open to the main chance. He was well-born, young and handsome, with an enviable military career, which he won by his six hundred miles march through the wilderness and his bravery with Montgomery at Quebec, and he was a rising man in his profession, and might have formed an alliance with any one of the wealthy and powerful families who lent lustre to the annals of their State. Such would have been the course of a politician or most ordinary men; but Burr, disdaining these advantages, married the poor widow of a British officer, the most unpopular thing in the then state of public feeling that he could have done. . . . But the father of Theodosia Burr came from no truckling race. There was no tainted blood in her veins. In choosing a wife, his choice was too sacred for mercenary or ambitious consideration.

We have seen that both the name of the clergyman and the exact place in which Colonel Burr and Mrs. Prevost were married are in doubt. There is an unsupported statement that a few days after the wedding the happy pair paid a visit to Connecticut, of which State a nephew of Colonel Burr was then Governor, and that they were received with attention.

That the courtship and later union were produc-

tive of mutual happiness to an unusual degree is evidenced by the correspondence which took place before and after marriage. These letters have been printed either in full or in part by Colonel Burr's biographers, Knapp, and Davis, and Parton, but they are so interesting, and so conclusive of the continued existence of marital harmony, that copious extracts from them are here reproduced. In his, will be found philosophy, literary criticism, suggestions as to their daughter's education, and much advice on household matters; in hers, more philosophy, more remarks on literary subjects, references to the little Theodosia's health and progress in her studies, remarks about her own health, accounts of home life and pastimes, and some allusions to household matters, including mention of her two sons, Frederick A. J. and John Bartow Prevost, who were students in Colonel Burr's law office in later years. He had always taken a great interest in their education, as it was his wish that they should be accomplished and well-educated men. All his communications on legal matters, when away on business, were sent to Mrs. Burr and by her communicated to other attorneys, or to his stepsons.

*From Mrs. Prevost.*

LITCHFIELD, February 12, 1781.

I am happy that there is a post established for the winter. I shall expect to hear from you every week. My ill health will not permit me to return your punctuality. You must be contented with hearing once a fortnight. . . .

(Mrs. Prevost's health was very feeble, and continued so, after she became the wife of Colonel Burr, until her decease.)

If the person whose kind partiality you mention is Paterson, I con-



James Parton, one of Col. Burr's biographers.





fess myself exceedingly flattered, as I entertain the highest opinion of the perspicuity of his judgment. Say all the civil things you please for his solicitous attention to my health. But if it should be Troup, which I think more probable, assure him of my most permanent gratitude.

*From Mrs. Prevost.*

LITCHFIELD, March 6, 1781.

How strangely we pass through life! All acknowledge themselves mortal and immortal; and yet prefer the trifles of to-day to the treasures of eternity. Piety teaches resignation. Resignation without piety loses its beauty and sinks into insensibility. Your beautiful quotation is worth more than all I can write in a twelvemonth. Continue writing on the subject. It is both pleasing and improving. The better I am acquainted with it, the more charms I find. Worlds should not purchase the little I possess. I promise myself many happy hours dedicated at the shrine of religion.

*From Mrs. Prevost.*

LITCHFIELD, May, 1781.

Our being the subject of much inquiry, conjecture, and calumny is no more than we ought to expect. My attention to you was ever pointed enough to attract the observation of those who visited the house. Your esteem more than compensated for the worst they could say. When I am sensible I can make you happy, and myself happy, I will readily join you to suppress their malice. But till I am confident of *this*, I cannot think of our union. Till then I shall take shelter under the roof of my dear mother, where, by joining stock, we shall have sufficient to stem the current of adversity.

*From Mrs. Prevost.*

SHARON, September 11, 1781.

My friend and neighbor, Mr. Livingston, will have the pleasure of presenting you this. You will find him quite the gentleman and worthy your attention.

Enclosed is a letter to my sister, which must be delivered by yourself. You know my reasons too well to infer from my caution that I entertain the least doubt of Mr. Livingston's punctuality. . . .

Mr. and Mrs. Reeve were well a few days ago. She rides every

morning to visit the boy, and returns before breakfast. I fear they will disappoint me in the promised visit.

We were obliged to Dr. Cutting for the most pleasing account of your health and spirits. Also of your great progress in law.

*From Colonel Burr.*

ALBANY, June 5, 1781.

That mind is truly great which can bear with equanimity the trifling and unavoidable vexations of life, and be affected only by those events which determine our substantial bliss. Every period and every situation has a portion of these trifling crosses; and those who expect to avoid them all must be wretched without respite.

*From Colonel Burr.*

Saturday, December 5, 1781.

A sick headache this whole day. I earned it by eating last night a hearty supper of Dutch sausages, and going to bed immediately after. . . . I took the true Indian cure for the headache. Made a light breakfast of tea, stretched myself on a blanket before the fire, fasted till evening, and then tea again. I thought, through the whole day, that if you could sit by me and stroke my head with your little hand, it would be well; and that when we are formally united, far from deeming a return of this disorder *un malheur*, I should esteem it a fortunate apology for a day of luxurious indulgence, which I should not otherwise allow myself or you.

*From Colonel Burr.*

Sunday, December 6, 1781.

An old, weather-beaten lady, Miss Depeyster, has given the whole history of Burr, and much of Theo, but nothing unfavorable. In a place where Burr thought himself a stranger, there is scarce any age or sex that does not, either from information or acquaintance, know something of him.

I am surprised I forgot to advise you to get a Franklin fireplace. They have not the inconvenience of stoves, are warm, save wood, and never smoke. The cost will not be, probably, more than ten or fifteen dollars, which will be twice saved this winter in wood and comfort, and they may be moved any where. If you have any fears about Burr

(Mrs. Prevost's youngest child) I have none. He will never burn himself but once; and, by way of preventive, I would advise you to do that for him. . . . It is of the first importance, that you suffer as little as possible the present winter. It may, in a great measure, determine your health ever after. I confess I have still some transient distrusts that you set too little value on your own life and comfort. Remember, it is not yours alone; but your letters shall convince me.

*From Colonel Burr.*

Sunday, December 13, 1781.

Mr. Van Rensselaer has succeeded perfectly to my wish. I am with two maidens, aunts of his, obliging, and (incredible!!) good-natured. The very paragon of neatness. Not an article of furniture, even to a tea-kettle, that would soil a muslin handkerchief.

*From Colonel Burr.*

December 16, 1781.

I have also been busy in fixing a Franklin fireplace for myself. I shall have it completed to-morrow. I am resolved you shall have one or two of them. You have no idea of their convenience, and you can at any time remove them.

*From Colonel Burr.*

ALBANY, December 23, 1781.

My dear Theodosia is now happy by the arrival of Carlos. This was not wishing you a happy Christmas, but actually making it so. Let all our compliments be henceforth practical. The language of the world sounds fulsome to tastes refined by the sweets of affection.

I see mingled in the transports of the evening the frantic little Bartow. Too eager to embrace the bliss he has in prospect; frustrating his own purposes by inconsiderate haste; misplacing everything, and undoing what he meant to do. It will only confuse you. Nothing better can be done than to tie him, in order to expedite his own business. . . .

The whole of your letter was marked with a degree of confidence and reliance which augurs everything that is good. The French letter was truly elegant, as also that enclosed in compliance with my request.

## THEODOSIA

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, May, 1785.

The family as you left it. Bartow never quits the office and is perfectly obliging. Your dear little daughter seeks you twenty times a day; calls you to your meals, and will not suffer your chair to be filled by any of the family. . . .

Bartow has been to the surveyor-general; he cannot inform him the boundaries of those lots for J. W. There is no map of them but one in Albany.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

Friday morning.

Mr. Marvin calls for my letter this morning, which will be delivered with a pound of green tea I have purchased for your landlady at two dollars. He has called. I am hurried. Ten thousand loves.

*Toujours la vôtre,*

THEODOSIA.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

May, 1785.

The girls must give me a history of their time, from rising to night. The boys, anything which interests them, and which, of course, will interest me. Are there any or very pressing calls at the office? The word is given to mount. I shall have time to seal this and overtake them. Kiss for me those who love me.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, April, 1785.

The family as you left it. Thy Theodosia's health and spirits increase daily. Bartow's industry and utility are striking to the family and strangers. . . .

I find I am continually speaking of myself. I can only account for it from my Aaron having persuaded me 'tis his favorite subject, and the extreme desire I have to please him induces me to pursue it.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

May 19, 1785.

The letters of our dear children are a feast. Every part of them is pleasing and interesting.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

Sunday, May 22, 1785.

You will receive a pail of butter, perhaps, with this. I have been contracting for the year.

Have you done running up and down stairs? How do you live, sleep, and amuse yourself? I wish, if you have leisure (or, if you have not, make it), you would read the Abbé Mably's little book on the Constitution of the United States.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, May 22, 1785.

Mr. Brown very punctually and civilly came with your welcome packet of Thursday, nine o'clock. It was just before dinner; the children were dispersed at different employments. I furnished the mantelpiece with the contents of the packet. When dinner was served up they were called. You know the usual eagerness on this occasion. They were all seated but Bartow when he espied the letters; the surprise, the joy, the exclamations exceed description. A most joyous repast succeeded. We talked of our happiness, of our first of blessings, our best of papas. . . . Your dear little Theo grows the most engaging child you ever saw. She frequently talks of and calls on her dear papa. It is impossible to see her with indifference.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, August 28, 1785.

Young —— and his companions have just left us; at tasting your Madeira he pronounced you a d——d clever fellow. Your merit increased with the number of glasses; they went away in good humor with themselves and the hostess. Oh, my love, how earnestly I pray that our children may never be driven from your paternal direction. Had you been home to-day you would have felt as fervent in this prayer as your Theo. Our children were impressed with utter contempt for their guest. This gave me real satisfaction.

I really believe, my dear, few parents can boast of children whose minds are so prone to virtue. I see the reward of our assiduity with inexpressible delight, with a gratitude few experience. My Aaron, they have grateful hearts; some circumstances prove it, which I shall relate to you with singular pleasure at your return.

## THEODOSIA

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, August 29, 1785.

Our little daughter's health has improved beyond my expectations. Your dear Theodosia cannot hear you spoken of without an apparent melancholy; insomuch that her nurse is obliged to exert her invention to divert her, and myself avoid to mention you in her presence. She was one whole day indifferent to everything but your name. Her attachment is not of a common nature; though this was my opinion, I avoided the remark, when Mr. Grant observed it to me as a singular instance.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, September 25, 1785.

Thy orders shall be attended to. Mamma joins in the warmest assurances of sincerest affection. Theodosia and Sally in perfect health.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, August, 1786.

Bartow has enclosed the papers. Those you mentioned to me on the night of your departure I cannot forward, as I have forgot the names of the parties, and they cannot guess them in the office from my description. I hope the disappointment will not be irreparable. . . .

The two girls followed you to the stagehouse, and saw you seated and drive off. . . . I have just determined to take a room at Aunt Clarke's till Sally recovers her appetite; by the advice of the physician, we have changed her food from vegetable to animal. A change of air may be equally beneficial. You shall have a faithful account. . . . Theodosia has written to you and is anxious lest I should omit sending it.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

ALBANY, August, 1786.

Why are you so cautiously silent as to our little Sally? You do not say that she is better or worse, from which I infer that she is worse. I am not wholly pleased with your plan of meat diet. It is recommended upon the idea that she has no disorder but a general debility. All the disorders of this season are apt to be attended with fevers, in which case animal diet is unfriendly.



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*To Mrs. Burr.*

ALBANY, August, 1786.

I have judgment for Maunsel against Brown, after a labored argument. Inform him with my regards.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, November, 1787.

Our two dear pledges have an instinctive knowledge of their mother's bliss. They have been awake all the evening. I have the youngest in my arms. Our sweet prattler exclaims at every noise, "There's dear papa," and runs to meet him . . . My spirits and nerves coincide in asking repose. Your daughter commands it. Our dear children join in the strongest assurances of honest love.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

POUGHKEEPSIE, June 29, 1788.

Much love to the smiling little girl. I received her letter but not the pretty things.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

ALBANY, November, 1788.

A Captain Randolph will call with Mr. Mersereau. He is a soldier and an honest man. Give him something to drink. They will answer all your questions.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

October 21, 1789.

I have this moment received your letter of Sunday evening, containing the account of your alarming accident and most fortunate rescue and escape. I thank Heaven for your preservation, and thank you a thousand times for your interesting and particular account of it.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

ALBANY, October 28, 1789.

The history of your sufferings this moment received. My sympathy was wholly with your unfortunate left hand. The distressing circumstances respecting your face must certainly be owing to something more than the mere misfortune of your burn. . . . Frederick



is the laziest dog in the world for not having written me of your situation.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

CLAVERACK, June 27, 1791.

It is surprising that you tell me nothing of Theo. I would by no means have her writing and arithmetic neglected. It is the part of her education which is of the most present importance.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, June 30, 1791.

The Edwardses dine with me; they had taken lodgings previous to their arrival in consequence of a report made them by the little Bodowins (who were at Mrs. Moore's last winter) that my house was too small and inconvenient to admit of a spare bed. I esteem it a lucky escape. It would have been impossible for me to have borne the fatigue. Charlotte is worn out with sleepless nights, laborious days, and an anxious mind. Hannah constantly drunk. Except William, who is a mere waiter, I have no servant.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, July 2, 1791.

Theo never can or will make the progress we would wish while she has so many avocations. I kept her home a week in hopes Shepherd would consent to attend her at home, but he absolutely declined it, as his partners thought it derogatory to their dignity. I was therefore obliged to submit and permit her to go as usual. She begins to cipher. Mr. Chevalier attends regularly and I take care she never omits learning her French lesson. I believe she makes most progress in this. Mr. St. Aivre never comes; he can get no fiddler, and I am told his furniture, etc., have been seized by the sheriff. I don't think the dancing lessons do much good while the weather is so warm; they fatigue too soon. As to the music, upon the footing it now is she can never make progress, though she sacrifices two-thirds of her time to it. 'Tis a serious check to her other acquirements. She must either have a forte-piano at home or renounce learning it. Her education is not on an advantageous footing at present. The moment we are alone she tries to amuse me with her improvement, which the little jade knows will always command my attention.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

NEW YORK, July 3, 1791.

Theo has begun to write several letters, but never finished one. The only time she has to write is also the hour of general leisure, and, when once she is interrupted, there is no making her return to work.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

ALBANY, July 17, 1791.

I hope Theo will learn to ride on horseback. Two or three hours a day at French and arithmetic will not injure her. Be careful of green apples, etc.

*From Mrs. Burr.*

PELHAM, July 23, 1791.

You may command Bartow's attendance here whenever it suits you, and you have a faithful envoy in Frederick, who will go post with your commands as often as you wish. It is, indeed, of serious consequence to you to establish your health before you commence politician: when you once get engaged, your industry will exceed your strength; your pride cause you to forget yourself. But remember, you are not your own; there are those who have stronger claims than ambition ought to have, or the public can have. . . . Theo is much better; she writes and ciphers from five in the morning to eight, and also the same hours in the evening. Theo makes amazing progress at figures. Though Louisa has worked at them all winter and appeared quite an adept at first, yet Theo is now before her and assists her to make her sums. You will really be surprised at her improvement. She does not ride on horseback, though Frederick has a very pretty riding horse he keeps for her; but were she to attempt it now, there would be so much jealousy, and so many would wish to take their turn, that it would really be impracticable. But we have the best substitute imaginable. As you gave me leave to dispose of the old wheels as I pleased, I gave them as my part towards a wagon; we have a good plain Dutch wagon that I prefer to a carriage when at Pelham, as the exercise is much better. We ride in numbers and are well jolted, and without dread. 'Tis the most powerful exercise I know. No spring wats, but, like so many pigs, we bundle together on straw. Four miles are equal to twenty. It is really an acquisition. I hope you will see our little girl rosy checked and plump as a partridge.

## THEODOSIA

*From Mrs. Burr.*

PELHAM, July 27, 1791.

Hy! ho! for the major. I am tired to death of living in a nursery. It is very well to be amused with children at an idle hour; but their interruption at all times is insupportable to a person of common reflection. My nerves will not admit of it. (Major Prevost was a widower, and his children were left in the care of Mrs. Burr while he made a voyage to England.)

Theodosia is quite recovered and makes great progress at ciphering. I cannot say so much in favor of her writing. We now keep her chiefly at figures, which she finds very difficult, particularly to proportion them and place them straight under each other.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, October 30, 1791.

Theodosia must not attempt music in the way she was taught last spring. For the present let it be wholly omitted. Neither would I have her renew her dancing till the family are arranged. She can proceed in her French, and get some teacher to attend her in the house for writing and arithmetic. She has made no progress in the latter and is even ignorant of the rudiments. She was hurried through different rules without having been able to do a single sum with accuracy. I would wish her to be also taught geography, if a suitable teacher can be found.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, November 14, 1791.

I expressed myself ill if I led you to believe that I wished any evidence or criterion of Theodosia's understanding. I desire only to promote its growth by its application and exercise. Her present employments have no such tendency, unless arithmetic engages a part of her attention. Than this, nothing can be more useful, or better advance the object I have in view. . . . I have no voice, but could, undoubtedly, have some influence in the appointment you speak of. For the man you know I have always entertained much esteem, but it is here said that he drinks. The effect of the belief, even of the suspicion of this, could not be controverted by any exertion or influence of his friends.

More than a year before Colonel Burr's marriage, Judge William Paterson, a life-long friend, wrote him, wishing him marital felicity. The Judge must have known of Burr's interest in the Widow Prevost.

My dear Burr:

RARITAN, April 14, 1780.

I take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of your *dateless* letter, and returning you my best thanks for it. Mr. and Mrs. Reeve have been so kind as to tarry a night with me. We endeavored to prevail upon them to pass a few days with us, and should have been happy if we could have succeeded. . . . I wrote you the latter end of January from the Hermitage and intrusted the letter to Mrs. Prevost. It was a mere scrawl. This is of the same cast. However, I promise the very first leisure hour to devote it entirely to you in the letter way. Although I do not write frequently to you, yet, believe me, I think frequently of you. Oh, Burr! May you enjoy health and be completely happy; as much so as I am — more I cannot wish you. Nor will you be able to attain high felicity until you experience such a union as I do.

The Mr. and Mrs. Reeve referred to in the letter were Judge Tappan Reeve and his wife, formerly Miss Sarah Burr, the Colonel's only sister.

Burr's letters to his wife, and the opinion expressed of her years after her death, show that he was thankful to have been so endowed with a heart capable of seeing and knowing the innocence, beauty, and value of the gift which had been bestowed upon him. Surely love conquers all things — is immeasurably above all ambition, more precious than wealth, more noble than name. He knows not life who knows not that — he has not felt the highest faculty of the soul who has not enjoyed it. In the name of Theodosia, his wife, he wrote the completion of hope and the summit of happiness. To

have such a love is the only blessing, in comparison with which all earthly joy is of little value.

That Mrs. Burr's married life was very happy is proved conclusively by the letters written to her husband, and from him to her.

From March 4, 1791, to March 4, 1797, Colonel Burr was a member of the Senate of the United States, and unable to see his wife and family except at long intervals. To make the trip from Philadelphia to New York, as a rule, took three days, while a greater period of time was often required for the journey.

Brief extracts from Colonel Burr's letters to his wife follow; they cover a wide range of subjects, as did those written before marriage. Constant references are made to her health; in fact, she was an invalid from the time of her marriage until her death. If Burr had been a heartless man, he would have deserted her, but he never failed in solicitude or helpfulness. In the latter part of 1793 he addressed his letters to his daughter instead of Mrs. Burr, but in all of them were inquiries as to his wife's health, and suggestions as to the treatment of her complaint. The celebrated Dr. Rush lived in Philadelphia where Congress sat, and Colonel Burr was in constant communication with him in reference to her disease.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 19th February, 1791.

It will not do for me at present to leave this place. I shall therefore expect you here; and if you cannot spare the time to come here, I will meet you either at Princeton or Trenton (preferring the latter), any evening you shall name. Saturdays and Sundays, you know, are our



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holydays. I can with ease be at Trenton at breakfast on Saturday morning, or even Friday evening, if thought more eligible. My rooms at No. 130 South Second Street are ready to receive you and Mrs. A., if she chooses to be of the party. . . . My lodgings are on the right hand as you come. Drive directly up a white gate between two lamps, and take possession. If I should be out, the servant will know where, and will find me in a few minutes. Do not travel with any election partisan (unless an opponent).

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 4th December, 1791.

I fear I have for the present deprived you of the pleasure of reading Gibbon. If you cannot procure the loan of a London edition, I will send you that which I have here. In truth, I bought it for you, which is almost confessing a robbery.

To render any reading really amusing, or in any degree instructive, you should never pass a word you do not understand, or the name of a person or place of which you have not some knowledge. After an experiment of this mode you will never abandon it.

If you have never read Plutarch's Lives (or even if you have), you will read them with much pleasure. You expressed a curiosity to peruse Paley's Philosophy and Natural History. When you are weary of soaring with him, and wish to descend into common life, read the Comedies of Plautus. The reading of one book will invite you to another. I cannot, I fear, at this distance, advise you successfully; much less can I hope to assist you in your reading. Your complaint of your memory, even if founded in fact, contains nothing discouraging or alarming. I would not wish you to possess that kind of memory which retains with accuracy and certainty all names and dates. I never knew it to accompany much invention or fancy. It is almost the exclusive blessing of dullness. The mind which perceives clearly, adopts and appropriates an idea, and is thus enlarged and invigorated. It is of little moment whether the book, the time, or the occasion be recollected.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, December 13, 1791.

Tell Bartow that I have this evening received his letter by Vining, who arrived in town last Monday. Beg him never again to write by a

private hand about business when there is a post. . . . I was charmed with your reflections on the books of two of our eminent characters. You have, in a few words, given a lively portrait of the men and their works. I could not repress the vanity of showing it to a friend of one of the authors.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, December 15, 1791.

Your "nonsense" about Voltaire contains more good sense than all the strictures I have seen upon his works put together. Next to your own ideas, those you gave me from Mr. J. were most acceptable. I wish you would continue to give me any fugitive ideas or remarks which may occur to you in the course of your reading; and what you call your rattling way, is that of all things which pleases me the most. In short, let the way be your own, and it cannot fail to be acceptable, to please, and to amuse.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 18th December, 1791.

Your account of Madame Genlis surprises me, and is a new evidence of the necessity of reading books before we put them into the hands of children. Reputation is indeed a precarious test. . . .

You would excuse the slovenliness, and admire the length of this scrawl, if you could look into my study and see the file of unanswered and even unperused letters; bundles of papers on public and on private business; all soliciting that preference of attention which Theodosia knows how to command from her —

AARON.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 27th December, 1791.

This evening I am suffering under a severe paroxysm of the headache. Your letters received to-night have tended to beguile the time, and were at least a temporary relief. I am now sitting with my feet in warm water, my head wrapped in vinegar, and drinking chamomile tea, and all hitherto to little purpose. . . . I am charmed with your account of Theodosia. Kiss her a hundred times for me.

I have been these three weeks procuring two trifles to send you; but am at length out of all patience with the stupidity and procrastination of those employed; especially as the principal article is a piece of furniture, a personal convenience, which, when done, will not cost

five dollars. The other is something between a map and a picture. Though they will not arrive at the season I had wished, they will at any season be tokens of the affection of

A. BURR.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 18th January, 1793.

I wrote you yesterday and have nothing to add respecting myself; and only a repetition of my prayers for you, with my most affectionate and anxious wishes.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 8th February, 1793.

You may recollect that I left a memorandum of what Theo was to learn. I hope it has been strictly attended to. Desire Gurney not to attempt to teach her anything about the "concord." I will show him how I choose that should be done when I return, which, I thank God, is but three weeks distant. . . .

I have been out but once, half an hour at Mrs. P's, a concert; but I call often at Mrs. L's. I am more and more struck with the native good sense of one of that family, and more and more disgusted with the manner in which it is observed and perverted. Cursed effects of fashionable education, of which both sexes are the advocates, and yours eminently the victims. If I could foresee that Theo would become a mere fashionable woman, with all the attendant frivolity and vacuity of mind, adorned with whatever grace and allurements, I would earnestly pray God to take her forthwith hence. But I yet hope by her, to convince the world what neither sex appears to believe — that women have souls.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 15th February, 1793.

It was a knowledge of your mind which first inspired me with a respect for that of your sex, and with some regret, I confess, that the ideas which you have often heard me express in favor of female intellectual powers are founded on what I have imagined, more than what I have seen, except in you. I have endeavored to trace the causes of this rare display of genius in women, and find them in the errors of education, of prejudice, and of habit. I admit that men are equally, nay more, much more to blame than women. Boys and girls are generally educated much in the same way until they are eight or nine



years of age, and it is admitted that girls make at least equal progress with the boys; generally, indeed, they make better. Why, then, has it never been thought worth the attempt to discover, by fair experiment, the particular age at which the male superiority becomes so evident? . . . I do not like Theo's indolence, or the apologies which are made for it. Have my directions been pursued with regard to her Latin and geography?

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 16th February, 1793.

You have heard me speak of Miss Wollstonecraft, who has written something on the French revolution; she has also written a book entitled "Vindication of the Rights of Woman." I had heard it spoken of with a coldness little calculated to excite attention; but as I read with avidity and prepossession everything written by a lady, I made haste to procure it, and spent the last night, almost the whole of it, in reading it. Be assured that your sex has in her an able advocate. It is, in my opinion, a work of genius. She has successfully adopted the style of Rousseau's *Emilius*, and her comment on that work, especially what relates to female education, contains more good sense than all the other criticisms upon him which I have seen put together. I promise myself much pleasure in reading it to you. Is it owing to ignorance or prejudice that I have not met a single person who had discovered or would allow the merit of this work?

*To Mrs. Burr.*

PHILADELPHIA, 18th February, 1793.

Be assured that after what you have written I shall not send for Gurney. Deliver him the enclosed. I hope it may animate his attention; and tell him, if you think proper, that I shall be much dissatisfied if Theo's progress in Latin be not very considerable at my return. Geography has, I hope, been abandoned, for he has no talent at teaching it.

*To Mrs. Burr.*

24th December, 1793.

Since being at this place I have had several conversations with Dr. Rush respecting your distressing illness, and I have reason to believe that he has given the subject some reflection. He has this evening

called on me and given me his advice that you should take hemlock. He says that in the way in which it is usually prepared, you should commence with a dose of one-tenth of a grain, and increase as you may find you can bear it; that it has the narcotic powers of opium, superadded to other qualities. When the dose is too great, it may be discovered by vertigo or giddiness; and that he has known it to work wonderful cures. I was the more pleased with this advice, as I had not told him that you had been in the habit of using this medicine; the concurrence of his opinion gave me great faith in it. God grant that it may restore your health, and to your affectionate

A. BURR.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 31st December, 1793.

You see I never let your letters remain a day unanswered, in which I wish you would imitate me. . . . I suspect your last journal was not written from day to day, but all on one, or at most two days, from memory. How is this? Ten or fifteen minutes every evening would not be an unreasonable sacrifice from you to me. . . . Give a place to your mamma's health in your journal. Omit the formal conclusion of your letters, and write your name in a larger hand. . . .

This day's mail has brought me nothing from you. I have but two letters in three, almost four, weeks and the journal is ten days in arrear. What — can neither affection nor civility induce you to devote to me the small portion of time which I have required? Are authority and compulsion, then, the only engines by which you can be moved? For shame, Theo! Do not give me reason to think so ill of you.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 4th January, 1794.

At the moment of closing the mail yesterday, I received your letter enclosing the pills. I cannot refer to it by date as it has none. Tell me truly did you write it without assistance? Is the language and spelling your own? If so, it does you much honor. The subject of it obliged me to show it to Dr. Rush, which I did with great pride. He inquired your age half a dozen times, and paid some handsome compliments to the handwriting, the style, and the correctness of your letter.

The account of your mamma's health distresses me extremely.

If she does not get better soon, I will quit Congress altogether and go home. . . .

My last letter to you was almost an angry one, at which you cannot be much surprised when you recollect the length of time of your silence, and that you are my only correspondent respecting the concerns of my family. I expect, on Monday or Tuesday next, to receive the continuation of your journal for the fortnight past.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 7th January, 1794.

The following are the only misspelled words: You write *acurate* for *accurate*; *laudnam* for *laudanum*; *intirely* for *entirely*; this last word, indeed, is spelled both ways, but *entirely* is the most usual and the most proper. Continue to use all these words in your next letter, that I may see that you know the true spelling. And tell me what is *laudanum*? Where and how made? And what are its effects?

"It was what she had long wished for, and was at a loss how to procure it."

Don't you see that this sentence would have been perfect and much more elegant without the last *it*? By the by, I took the liberty to erase the redundant *it* before I showed the letter.

I am extremely impatient for your further account of your mamma's health. The necessity of *laudanum* twice a day is a very disagreeable and alarming circumstance.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 10th January, 1794.

I fear that you will imagine that I have been inattentive to your last request about Dr. Rush; but the truth is, I can get nothing satisfactory out of him. He enumerates over to me all the articles which have been repeatedly tried, and some of which did never agree with your mamma. He is, however, particularly desirous that she should again try milk — a spoonful only at a time: another attempt, he thinks, should be made with porter, in some shape or other. Sweet oil, molasses and milk, in equal proportions, he has known to agree with stomachs which had rejected everything else. Yet he says, and with show of reason, that these things depend so much on the taste, the habits of life, the peculiarity of constitution, that she and her attending physician

can be the best, if not the only advisers. It gives me very great pleasure to learn that she is now better.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 13th January, 1794.

Dr. Rush says that he cannot conceive animal food to be particularly necessary; nourishment is the great object. He approves much of the milk punch and chocolate. The stomach must on no account be offended. The intermission of the pills for a few days (not, however, for a whole week) he thinks not amiss to aid in determining its effects. The quantity may yet be increased without danger, but the present dose is, in his opinion, sufficient; but after some days' continual use, a small increase might be useful. . . .

I have a letter from Mr. Leshlie, which pays you many compliments. He has also ventured to promise that you will every day get a lesson in Terence by yourself.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 16th January, 1794.


I hope the mercury, if tried, will be used with the most vigilant caution and the most attentive observation of its first effects. I am extremely anxious and apprehensive about the event of such an experiment. . . .

On Sunday se'nnight (I think the 26th) I shall, unless baffled or delayed by ice or weather, be with you at Richmond Hill. . . . I continue the practice of scoring words for our mutual improvement. I am sure you will be charmed with the Greek language above all others.

Reference has been made to a letter written by Mrs. Burr, soon after her marriage, to Mrs. Sarah Reeve, which letter, however, did not mention when the marriage took place or the clergyman's name.

On Sunday, August 3, 1788, she wrote from New York to her brother-in-law, Tappan Reeve, Esq., at Litchfield, Conn., as follows:

For what reason, my dear friends, have you omitted writing to us ever since you were here? I can learn nothing satisfactory since you



left Hartford. Do relieve my anxiety without delay. My health and spirits were in melancholy unison till the 9th of July, when I had a most unfortunate lying-in, in every particular resembling the one in February, '87 — another lovely boy expired seven hours before its birth. Its mother had nearly shared its fate, but Heaven in pity to her helpless family, to her daughter's tears, has deigned to restore her to them. During her illness she received every token of affection and anxiety from those she loved. This is the only alleviation we can possibly have to our sufferings. Colonel Burr left home a week since to attend the Supreme Court, now sitting at Albany. I wrote you a long letter two months ago, but by some strange fatality it was twice returned to me. I determined not to trust it to chance a third time, so destroyed it — after that my thoughts were too dull to demand the sympathy of friendship. Yours, my two dear friends, have left an indelible impression on my heart. I shall recollect it with gratitude — with unfeigned affection — to my latest breath. I am recovering beyond expectation. I wish I may have as favorable accounts from my Sally. Theo's health is remarkably good. She wishes me to hold her pen while she writes to Burr "Kiss him for me," but I am too fatigued even to continue this scrawl. Every good angel watch over you and love you, as does your friend in verity,

T. BURR.

On April 20, 1789, she wrote to Mrs. Reeve, mourning the loss of a dear friend, but giving no information as to her individuality:

From day to day, for some weeks past, I have wished to write to my much loved friends, but have not been able to summon resolution for the task. I requested Colonel Burr to do it for me. I hope he has. I am, my friends, the child of sorrow. My task is too great for human nature to support. Many and varied have my scenes of anguish been, but this exceeds them all. A tender, affectionate friend, just opening into life, with every unfolding virtue, guileless, innocent, sincere, beautiful and flushed with health till the sly viper stole upon her vitals, there preyed, unperceived by herself or those around her till too late; aid proved vain. She passed gently from me to the regions of bliss, without even suspecting her approaching fate. Yes, my Sally, she is there — gone a little while before me — but a little and I shall be with her, where sorrow dare not intrude; with her, smile at the dis-

appointments that have here harrowed up my soul; a complication of sorrows have long clouded every cheerful thought — this darkens all. Perhaps she has flown from innumerable sorrows. If her fate derived any influence from mine, she has certainly escaped much. Heaven took her gently from the impending storm, when her heart was best fitted to meet its God. She had nothing to regret, but all to hope. 'Tis I who must regret. My constant companion; not a moment passes but speaks my loss — the vacant apartments echo an angel gone.

My heart is so oppressed with sadness, my dear, that I can write no more. Let me hear from you; let me see you, if possible. Adieu.

Invariably yours,

T. BURR.

Living in close proximity to the early hostilities of the Revolutionary War, Mrs. Prevost became acquainted with both American and British officers. Her brother, Peter De Visme, was captured at sea and made prisoner of war. She solicited General Washington's influence to promote his exchange, to which the General replied:

Madam: HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK, 19th May, 1779.


It is much to be regretted that the pleasure of obeying the first emotions in favor of misfortune is not always in our power. I should be happy could I consider myself at liberty to comply with your request in the case of your brother, Mr. Peter De Visme. But, as I have heretofore taken no direction in the disposal of marine prisoners, I cannot, with propriety, interfere on the present occasion, however great the satisfaction I should feel in obliging where you are interested. Your good sense will perceive this, and find a sufficient excuse in the delicacy of my situation.

I have the honor to be, madam,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Colonel James Monroe, afterwards Governor of Virginia, then Minister to France, and subsequently President of the United States, at the outbreak of



the war was a student at the College of William and Mary in Virginia. Like Burr, he left his studies in 1776 to join the Continental Army. He took part as Lieutenant in the New Jersey campaign, and was wounded at the Battle of Trenton. The next year he served with the rank of Major on the staff of General William Alexander (Lord Sterling), but that being out of the line of promotion, he soon found himself without military employment. Having been disabled by wounds from more active service, it was questionable with him whether to return to his studies in Virginia or, by embarking for Europe, escape the conflict of arms, in which he was now ill-prepared to participate. During his campaigns in New Jersey, like other young officers of the army, he was a frequent guest and welcome visitor at the Hermitage, the home of the De Vismes, of which Mrs. Prevost was a member. In his absence either on military duty or from disability from wounds, like Burr, he held himself in happy remembrance by frequent correspondence. One of his letters has been preserved among the papers of Burr in the hands of his biographer; as an item of interest, illustrative of the gallantry of the times, it is here presented. It bears the date Philadelphia, November 8, 1778.

A young lady who either is, or pretends to be, in love, is, you know, my dear Mrs. Prevost, the most unreasonable creature in existence. If she looks a smile or a frown which does not immediately give or deprive you of happiness (at least in appearance) your company soon becomes very insipid. Each feature has its beauty, and each attitude the graces, or you have no judgment. But if you are so stupidly insensible of her charms as to deprive your tongue and eyes of every expression of admiration, and not only to be silent respecting her, but devote them to an absent object, she can not receive a higher insult;



Hon. James Monroe, a friend of Theodosia's mother —  
President of the United States, 1817 — 1824.







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nor would she, if not restrained by politeness, refrain from open resentment. Upon this principle I think I stand excused for not writing from Blue Ridge. I proposed it, however, and after meeting with opposition in — to obtain her point, she promised to visit the little Hermitage and make my excuses herself. I took occasion to turn the conversation to a different object, and pleaded for permission to go to France. I gave up in one instance and she certainly ought in the other. But writing a letter and going to France are very different, you will perhaps say. She objected to it, and all the arguments which a fond, devoted, and delicate unmarried lady could use, she did not fail to produce against it. . . . I painted a lady, full of affection, of tenderness, and sensibility, separated from her husband for a series of time by the cruelties of war, her uncertainties respecting his health, the pain and anxiety which must naturally arise from it. I represented, in the most pathetic terms, the disquietudes which, from the nature of her connection, might possibly intrude on her domestic retreat. I then raised to her view fortitude under distress; cheerfulness, life, and gayety in the midst of affection. I hope you will forgive me, my dear little friend, if I produced *you* to give life to the image. The instance, she owned, was applicable. She felt for you from her heart, and she has a heart capable of feeling. She wished not a misfortune similar to yours; but if I was resolved to make it so, she would strive to imitate your example.

Mr. Monroe then refers to the proposed action of the Whigs to deprive Mrs. Prevost of her estate.

I was unfortunate in not being able to meet with the Governor. He was neither at Elizabethtown, Blue Ridge, Princeton, or Trenton. I have consulted with several members of Congress on the occasion. They own the injustice, but cannot interfere. The laws of each State must govern itself. They cannot conceive the possibility of its taking place. General Lee says it must not take place, and if he was an absolute monarch, he would issue an order to prevent it, in a very peremptory manner. I cannot determine, with certainty, what I shall do until my arrival in Virginia.

Make my compliments to Mrs. and Miss De Visme, and believe me, with the sincerity of friendship,

JAMES MONROE



During his wife's sickness, Colonel Burr offered to resign his position as Senator and return to New York, but Mrs. Burr interposed a strenuous objection. She died in the spring of 1794. Her death was due, undoubtedly, to an internal cancer, probably in the stomach, for the treatment advised by Dr. Rush was accompanied with the special caution that the stomach must not be overloaded or irritated in any way. Her age, at the time of her marriage, has always been given as thirty-six; at her demise she must have been in her forty-eighth year. A careful study of reference works fails to disclose the place of burial, and, so far as known, no portrait of her is in existence.




## CHAPTER IX

### HER CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

**T**HEODOSIA, born June 23, 1783, was the only living child of Colonel Burr and Mrs. Theodosia Prevost Burr. The qualifying word "living" is used because, as stated in the previous chapter, Mrs. Burr lost two boys on account of premature birth. Her infancy was passed in Albany, where her parents resided at the time of her birth.

Her father had a great contempt for the frivolous educations given women at that time. A young girl had but two possible futures: one was to remain a lifelong charge on her parents or relatives; the other was to get married. The majority of them had independence enough to escape the first condition, if possible, so the goal of woman's ambition, in those days, was to become a wife. Although the men, as a rule, were highly educated, being college graduates, it was not thought essential that women should be their peers so far as what might be called a "literary" education was concerned. They embroidered, they worked samplers, played the forte-piano, sang despondent love songs, calculated to awaken the sympathies of their bachelor friends, and did not consider it "sudden" when their limited educational acquirements, coupled,



undoubtedly, with as much physical charm as the women of any nation or time ever had, led to a proposal of marriage. They were "cribbed and confined" by a stagnant environment. Those were the days of feasts and spirituous comfort, and the heads of families had the cream of such enjoyments, leaving but a modicum for their daughters and spouses. All men had a chance to become great; a woman was a woman, and there was no wish for her to be anything else.

Burr had read Lord Chesterfield's letters, and the foundation thus laid for his own self-education was later built upon by the works of Mrs. Inchbald and Mary Wollstonecraft. His eyes were opened, and he determined to give his daughter an education as much like a man's as possible, without subordinating, too greatly, the purely feminine characteristics. Burr believed, a century and a quarter ago, in the advanced education of women, and it can be truthfully said, to his credit, that he created a new order of womanhood. Take from him all credit that legitimately belongs to others, but, with justice, leave him what is rightfully his.

A member of the Burr family in a letter, says, speaking of a prominent literary woman of the present day: "Such women hold their positions because of the work done years ago by Burr and men like him." He added: "I remember reading the diary and letters of a writer eighty years ago (Mrs. Walter Browne) who spoke of Theodosia being at Saratoga and noted for her *learning*."

Another member of the family writes: "The fact, too, that Burr had a picture of Mary Woll-



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stonecraft over his mantelpiece suggests that his treatment and estimation of women intellectually ought to be re-examined, in view of the higher evolution of womanhood at the present time. What Cheetham did for Paine, what Griswold did for Poe, did not Davis do for Burr? The first little biographer often writes the great man down to his level, and sets the time that it takes generations to learn the truth. Notice what Wm. H. Seward and Thurlow Weed said about Burr and his correspondences in their autobiographies and reminiscences. If there was any dawn of the new sunrise in Burr, such men could never perceive it."

An author of the present day, of world-wide reputation, says (58):

"Aaron Burr, whose homicidal (?) and treasonable (?) deeds have been thrown into the shade by more splendid achievements of the kind in our day, was certainly in advance of the men of his time in his ideas on the capacity and education of women.

"There was no namby-pamby sentimentality in his method of training a clever, ambitious girl. He reared his daughter, Theodosia, to be the companion and equal of men of the highest intelligence and the most liberal culture — philosophers and statesmen. In his intense fatherly love and pride, he gave to her development and instruction the most watchful care and patient labor. The result was, I doubt not, all he wished for — a strong, pure, proud, self-poised womanhood, beautiful and gracious. Yet one thing seems to have been lacking to render it quite symmetrical, lovable, and

happy — the religious element. If the Edwards faith and spirituality had descended to her with the Edwards will and intellect, she would have been, indeed,

“‘ A perfect woman, nobly planned.’ ”

Mrs. Lippincott could have added, truthfully, that the religious element, if not by way of descent, was supplied by her mother's teaching and example, and it is a remarkable but never before credited fact, that in Burr's correspondence with his wife and daughter, and in his Journal in Europe, there cannot be found a word, sentence, or paragraph by which he endeavored to influence them, in any way, with matters connected with religion. If it be contended that he was an infidel judged by the prevailing religious tenets of the period, it surely is to his credit that he did not try to make proselytes of his wife and daughter, but left to them, uninfluenced by him, the full exercise of their religious feelings. Such conduct stands out nobly in contrast with that of many who have escaped the charge of infidelity, but not those of intolerance and persecution.

That Theodosia's mother was a religious woman is shown conclusively by the following extract from a letter written by her 6th March, 1781:

“May her afflicted spirit find the only solace of its woes — Religion, Heaven's greatest boon to man, the only distinction he ought to boast. In this he is lord of the creation; without it, the most pitiable of all created things. . . . *I promise myself many happy hours dedicated at the shrine of religion.*”



**"Grace Greenwood" (Mrs. S. J. Lippincott.)**



**Mrs. Harriette Clarke Sprague, 5th cousin to Theodosia.**







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Here is an example of modern appreciation of Burr's method of instruction (59):

Theodosia, the daughter of Aaron Burr, is described as one of the most brilliant of American women. To her father she was an object of pride as well as passionate affection, and the intensity of the daughter's devotion could not have been exceeded. She inherited his mental as well as his physical graces, and the brilliancy of her mind was as notable as the beauty of her person.

Whatever ambitions Aaron Burr may have had, the love of the father seems to have been capable of transcending them all in priority of interest. He had his own ideal of womanhood, and he devoted himself to forming her mind and training her character in accordance with that ideal. It so followed that at an age when other little girls were concerned almost wholly with the welfare of their dolls, Theodosia had been taught, in her tenth year, to read Horace and Terence in the original Latin. She moreover spoke French with remarkable grace and was an apt pupil in Greek.

Burr constituted himself her chief tutor, and was careful not to neglect her physical education, and she grew up with every wholesome feminine charm encouraged. It was not considered prudent, in that age, to foster independence of thought and self-reliance in girls, but Burr was assiduous in instilling into Theodosia the utmost freedom of intellectual view.

Theodosia, in some respects, did not pass a lonely childhood. To her mother's grief, and her own, however, her father's long absences from home on legal business, and his attendance at the sessions of the United States Senate, could not be avoided. Had it not been for these enforced absences from home pleasures, we should not have those always interesting and sometimes delightful letters written by Colonel Burr to his wife and daughter, from which copious extracts have already been taken. Such letters are truer indices of a man's real character than his speeches or his public acts.

To-day we revel in reminiscences and autobiographies. The great authors, actors, statesmen, and soldiers have left behind them diaries and letters which are eagerly sought and brought together by biographers who ask us to revise opinions formed upon what they show us was inadequate knowledge or hastily accepted prejudiced opinions of others.

The Burr family included the father and mother, both well known to us, Theodosia, the daughter, the subject of this volume, and Frederick A. J. and John Bartow Prevost, sons of Mrs. Prevost, and stepsons of Colonel Burr. There was also a certain "Sally," often referred to in Mrs. Burr's letters, but whose relationship is not disclosed therein.

Colonel Burr considered his stepsons as his own. The British general, Augustine Prevost, was their uncle, but he does not seem to have taken any particular interest in them. They were young, however, at the time of his death in England, in 1786.

Among Colonel Burr's army friends was one Major R. Alden. The major's pay for services was not forthcoming, and would have had little real money value if he had received it. Early in 1781, nearly a year and a half before his marriage, Colonel Burr offered the Major a position as tutor in Mrs. Prevost's family to teach his stepsons, offering him sixty pounds New York currency a year, and the use of his office and library without expense. In order to remove still further the possible sting of charity, Burr said in his letter: "Your *ostensible* reason for coming here shall be to pursue your law studies with me under my friend Mr. Paterson." Referring to his stepsons, Burr



Hon. Robert R. Livingston.





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wrote: "The two boys I wish you to instruct are of the sweetest tempers and the softest hearts. A frown is the severest punishment they need. Four hours a day will, I think, be fully sufficient for their instruction. There are hours enough left for study — as many as any one can improve to advantage, and these four will be fully made up to you by the assistance you will receive from such of us as have already made some small progress." That Major Alden did not accept the position does not detract from the credit due Colonel Burr for his interest in his future stepsons, or for his kindly offer of assistance to a needy friend.

In order that Theodosia might have the advantage of conversing in French with a Frenchwoman, Miss Nathalie de L'Age became a member of Colonel Burr's family. M. L. Davis says of her (60): "Miss Nathalie de L'Age was a young French woman of highly respectable family. She afterwards married Thomas Sumter, son of General Sumter, one of the Carolina partisan celebrities of the Revolution."

When Robert R. Livingston went as minister to France, he was accompanied by his wife, two daughters, with their husbands, who were both named Robert Livingston, Miss De L'Age, and Mr. Sumter, his Secretary of Legation. They sailed on the frigate *Boston*, commanded by a Captain Macniel, who is called "a nautical madman" by Davis. The voyage was a boisterous and perilous one, but love laughs at storms as well as at locksmiths, and on their arrival in Paris Miss De L'Age became Mrs. Sumter. Mr. Sumter was Minister

Plenipotentiary to Brazil for ten years, whither Mrs. Sumter accompanied him. Her portrait was painted by St. Mémin, an account of whom, and his work in America, will be found in Chapter XVIII.

One of the most interesting of Miss Theodosia's letters was written when she was about nine years old, to her step-brother, A. J. Frederick Prevost, to whom she was greatly attached, particularly so, later in life, when her father was in Europe. He became a farmer, and the "good pig" referred to in the letter was probably one of his own raising.

PELLHAM, October the 20th, 1792.

Dear Brother:

I hope the mumps have left you. Mine left me a week ago.

Mrs. Allen is come from Philadelphia and talks no more of going to live there.

Papa has been here and is gone again. He and the Frenchman *has* had a fray, so he keeps in fine order. The day before papa (went) away we had your good pig for *diner*. Mama was not very well that day. We three dined upstairs and the Frenchman below. Papa sent what he would have for *diner*; he sent word back again that all the *diner* should be brought *befor* him and he would see what he would have, so papa sent down beef and pig; he said he did not understand his dining below without papa and me.

Mr. Chapron is in Philadelphia at the point of death with the putrid fever, and Mr. Luet, an english music master, had an elegant forte-piano which papa bought for me; it cost 33 Guineas, and it is just come home.

I am tired of affectionate, not of being it but of writing it, so I leave it out; I am your sister,

THEODOSIA B. BRER.

It will be noticed that Theodosia used the initial "B" in her name, presumably for "Bartow," the middle name of her other step-brother.



Miss Nathalie de L'Age, Theodosia's French companion.





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Many references are made by writers to Lord Chesterfield's Letters, but usually only short quotations are given. Colonel Burr is said to have studied them and made them a guide in his intercourse with society. If his idea was to educate a daughter as near like a son as possible, it is probable that Theodosia read some of the Letters, if not all, and they may have influenced the formation of her character, as they are said to have done that of her father. An edition of the "Letters" was published recently (61).

That Colonel Burr had praised the Chesterfieldian system of education to Mrs. Prevost is evident from a letter written by her of date February 10, 1781, at which time she was in Litchfield, Conn., probably residing with Colonel Burr's sister, Mrs. Tappan Reeve.

*From Mrs. Prevost to Colonel Burr.*

I am happy that there is a post established. I will not say the same of your system of education. Rousseau has completed his work. The indulgence you applaud in Chesterfield is the only part of his writings I think reprehensible. Such lessons from so able a pen are dangerous to a young mind, and ought never to be read till the judgment and heart are established in virtue. If Rousseau's ghost can reach this quarter of the globe, he will certainly haunt you for this scheme — 'tis striking at the root of his design, and destroying the main purport of his admirable production. *Les foiblesses de l'humanité* is an easy apology.

When all the world turns envoys, Chesterfield will be their proper guide. Morality and virtue are not necessary qualifications — those only are to be attended to that tend to the public weal. But when parents have no ambitious views, or, rather, when they are of the more exalted kind, when they wish to form a happy, respectable member of society — a firm, pleasing support to their declining life, Emilius shall be the model. A man so formed must be approved by his Creator, and more useful to mankind than ten thousand modern beaux of society.

Mrs. Prevost was more in sympathy with the teachings of Jean Jacques Rousseau than with those of Chesterfield. Theodosia was fortunate in having her character moulded in conformity with the two most popularly approved systems of the time. To what can we point to-day as their worthiest successors?

But Theodosia's education was not influenced entirely by Rousseau or Chesterfield. It is said that Burr sat up all night to read "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman," written by Mary Wollstonecraft, who, after a tempestuous life, became the wife of the celebrated William Godwin. Dying in childbirth, she left a daughter, who became the second wife of the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. By one author (62) it is maintained that on the principles inculcated in Mary Wollstonecraft's book, Theodosia's mental and moral development were based.

Here is the general principle found in the work "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (63):

The main argument is built on this simple principle, that if woman be not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge, for the truth must be common to all, or it will be inefficacious with respect to its influence on general practice. And how can woman be expected to co-operate, unless she know why she ought to be virtuous? — unless freedom strengthen her reason till she comprehend her duty, and see in what manner it is connected with her real good. If children are to be educated to understand the true principle of patriotism, their mother must be a patriot; and the love of mankind, from which an orderly train of virtue springs, can only be produced by considering the moral and civil interest of mankind; but the education and situation of woman at present shuts her out from such investigations.

Mary Wollstonecraft, writing in 1791, contended



Mary Wollstonecraft, who wrote "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman."





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that the Government should establish day schools, in which boys and girls should be educated together — thus making herself a pioneer in co-education. She did not think young children should be confined to any sedentary employment for more than an hour at a time. She believed in relaxation and exercises to improve and amuse the senses — thus suggesting the kindergarten. She advocated industrial training for both boys and girls, particularly domestic employments for girls, and mechanical trades for boys, being a century in advance of the modern realization of her ideas.

She was not averse to advanced education for young people of superior abilities or fortune, but thought the principal objection to co-education came from parents, who were not willing to allow their children to choose companions for life themselves.

The publication of the work proved startling and many were shocked, but its purpose was misunderstood. Mr. Paul says (64):

“In the carrying out of her argument, the most noticeable fact is the extraordinary plainness of speech, and this it was that caused nearly all the outcry. For Mary Wollstonecraft did not, as has been supposed, attack the institution of Marriage, she did not assail orthodox religion, she did not directly claim much which at the present day is claimed for women by those whose arguments obtain respectful hearing. The book was really a plan for equality of education, a protest against being deemed only the plaything of man, an assertion that the intellectual rather than the sexual

intercourse was that which should chiefly be desired in marriage, and which made it lasting happiness."

Burr showed the book to all of his friends. He wrote: "Is it owing to ignorance or prejudice that I have not yet met a single person who had discovered or would allow the merit of this work?"

One of Burr's biographers speaks thus of the book (65):

"The work, indeed, was fifty years in advance of the time; for it anticipated all that is rational in the opinions respecting the position and education of women which are now held by the ladies who are stigmatized as strong-minded, as well as by John Mill, Herbert Spencer, and other economists of the modern school. It demanded fair play for the *understanding* of women. It proclaimed the essential equality of the sexes. It denounced the awful libertinism of that age, and showed that the weakness, the ignorance, the vanity, and the seclusion of women prepared them to become the tool and minion of bad men's lust. . . . It is a really noble and brave little book, undeserving the oblivion into which it has fallen. No intelligent woman, no wise parent with daughters to rear, could read it now without pleasure and advantage."

The "oblivion" is doubtless due to the fact that the reforms called for in the book have been, in a great measure, accomplished, and new advances in reform now claim the attention of progressive minds. There are books being published to-day which must await an intelligent posterity of readers to appreciate them. Mr. Parton says that the book

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was fifty years in advance of the time. Burr appreciated its teachings and applied them in the education of his daughter — consequently, it must be acknowledged, as the book's teachings are now accepted, that Burr's ideas in regard to education were half a century ahead of the time in which he lived.

Parton says further: "In those days an educated woman was among the rarest of rarities. The wives of many of our most renowned Revolutionary leaders were surprisingly illiterate. Except the noble wife of John Adams, whose letters form so agreeable an oasis in the published correspondence of the time, it would be difficult to mention the name of one lady of the Revolutionary period who could have been a companion to the *mind* of a man of culture. Mrs. Burr, on the contrary, was the equal of her husband in literary discernment, and his superior in moral judgment. . . . She relished all of Chesterfield except the 'indulgence' which Burr thought essential. She had a weakness for Rousseau, but was not deluded by his sentimentality."

Parton thinks that Theodosia's education was conducted in the spirit of Mary Wollstonecraft's book. He says her mind had fair play and that her father took it for granted that she could learn what a boy of the same age could learn, and he gave her precisely the same advantages which he would have given a son, and which he did give to her two step-brothers.

Mrs. Peacock writes: "It is but a negative tribute to say that she was by far the best educated



woman of her time and country. In the beauty of her mind and person she realized her father's ideal of a perfect woman, and amply satisfied his pride and vanity. On the eve of his duel with Hamilton, he wrote to her, 'You have completely satisfied all that my heart and affections had hoped for, or ever wished.'"

A genealogist thus refers to Theodosia (66):

"She was carefully educated under the direct and constant supervision of her father. Besides the usual accomplishments, she was proficient in the Greek, Latin, German, and French languages, and familiar with the best works of ancient and modern writers."

Parton enumerates her accomplishments thus: "In her tenth year she was reading Horace and Terence in the original Latin, learning the Greek grammar, speaking French, studying Gibbon, practising on the piano, taking lessons in dancing, and learning to skate."

Writers of the present day still dwell upon Theodosia and her education (67).

"Burr watched the education of his daughter down to the smallest details. At least in her mental development Jonathan Edwards himself could not have been more punctilious if he had been her instructor. Not only her correspondence, her selection of books, and her exercises were regulated by her father, but her manners, and even her diet. . . . Often he would write to her, while she was in the budding years of girlhood, sprightly epistles of English composition."

She was asked to decide whether "authoress"

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should be used instead of "author," to read certain novels, then popular, and to write a description of a ball, taking the novels as a model.

Mr. Perrine continues: "But Theodosia was urged also to more serious tasks. Thus, at a later time, she translated the Constitution of the United States into French, and at her father's request (while he was in Europe) undertook, and partly carried out, a similar exercise on one of (Jeremy) Bentham's works."

The most graphic and interesting account of Theodosia's education from early childhood to young womanhood, even to within a year of her marriage, is found in her father's letters. When she was in her eighth year he was chosen a United States Senator, and for the six years of his term his visits to his home were few and widely separated. Her mother's health was precarious, and his letters were a *mélange* of educational hints, family matters, social and political visits and interviews, inquiries as to her mother's health, and such medical advice as he could obtain from physicians in Philadelphia. A collection has been made from them for presentation here, but the letters have been carefully pruned and, so far as possible, all extraneous matter not relating to Theodosia's education has been excised. With the possible exception of Chesterfield's Letters, there is extant to-day no similar collection in epistolary form of the education of a young girl from childhood to womanhood. As her childish mind unfolded, his letters became more mature. Reproof and commendation were often given in the same communication.

Errors in spelling were pointed out, and reference to the dictionary for the meaning of all words, or the use of more expressive or correct ones, often advised. The keeping of a diary was required to contain an account of home life, and, particularly, a record of her progress in her manifold studies. There were constant admonitions to care for her health, and occasional visits and vacations were permitted to remove what would have been a dangerous mental strain to one less gifted or ambitious.

*To Miss Theodora Burr.*

ALBANY, 5th August, 1792.

I received your letter which is very short and says not one word of your mamma's health. . . .

See what a letter I have got from little Burr (a nephew) and all his own work too. Before I left home I wrote him a letter requesting him to tell me what I should bring him; and in answer he begs me to bring mamma and you. A pretty present, indeed, that would be!

Your father,

A. BURR.

A mild reproof and a comparison of her letter with one from "little Burr," his nephew.

*To Miss Theodora Burr.*

WESTCHESTER, 8th October, 1792.

I rose up suddenly from the sofa, and rubbing my head — "What book shall I buy for her?" said I to myself. "She reads so much and so rapidly that it is not easy to find proper and amusing French books for her; and yet I am so flattered with her progress in that language, that I am resolved that she shall, at all events, be gratified. Indeed, I owe it to her." So, after walking once or twice briskly across the floor, I took my hat and sallied out, determined not to return till I had purchased something. It was not my first attempt. I went into one bookseller's shop after another. I found plenty of fairy tales and such nonsense, fit for the generality of children of nine or ten years old.

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"These," said I, "will never do. Her understanding begins to be above such things;" but I could see nothing that I would offer with pleasure to an *intelligent, well informed girl of nine years old*. I began to be discouraged. The hour of dining was come. "But I will search a little longer," I persevered. At last I found it. I found the very thing I sought. It is contained in two volumes octavo, handsomely bound, and with prints and registers. It is a work of fancy, but replete with instruction and amusement. I must present it with my own hand.

An indirect but dainty compliment, which, no doubt, Theodosia fully appreciated.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 20th February, 1793.

At length, my dear Theo, I have received your letter of the 20th of January — written, you see, a month ago. But I observe that it was not put into the post office until day before yesterday. I suppose Frederick or Bartow had carelessly put it in some place where it had lain forgotten. It would indeed have been a pity that such a letter should have been lost. There is something in the style and arrangement of the words which would have done honor to a girl of sixteen.

Alexis (a colored boy) often bids me to send you some polite and respectful message on his part, which I have heretofore omitted. He is a faithful, good boy. Upon our return home he hopes you will teach him to read.

I am, my dear Theo,

Your affectionate papa,

A. BURR.

A touch of reproof, softened by another veiled compliment.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 24th February, 1793.

In looking over a list made yesterday (and now before me) of letters of consequence to be answered immediately, I find the name of T. B. Burr. At the time I made the memorandum I did not advert to the compliment I paid you by putting your name in a list with some of the most eminent persons in the United States. So true is it that your letters are really of consequence to me.

Somewhat satirical, but yet calculated to increase the self-esteem of the recipient.

*To his daughter Theodora.*

PHILADELPHIA, 16th December, 1793.

I have a thousand questions to ask, my dear Theo, but nothing to communicate; and thus I fear it will be throughout the winter, for my time is consumed in the dull uniformity of study and attendance in Senate; but every hour of *your* day is interesting to me. I would give, what would I not give, to see or know even your most trifling amusements? This, however, is more than I can ask or expect. But I do expect with impatience your journal. Ten minutes every morning demand; if you should choose to make it twenty, I shall be the better pleased. You are to note the occurrences of the day as concisely as you can; and, at your pleasure, to add any short reflections or remarks that may arise. I give you a sample of your journal for one day:

*Plan of the Journal.*

Learned 230 lines, which finished Horace. Heigh-ho for Terence and the Greek grammar to-morrow.

Practised two hours, less thirty-five minutes, which I begged off.

Hewlett (dancing master) did not come.

Began Gibbon last evening. I find he requires as much study and attention as Horace; so I shall not rank the reading of him among amusements.

Skated an hour; fell twenty times, and find the advantage of a hard head and —

Ma better — dined with us at table, and is still sitting up and free from pain.

Your affectionate papa,

A. BURR.

A heartfelt cry for news from home, and a very practical way of obtaining it.

*To his daughter Theodora.*

PHILADELPHIA, 25th December, 1793.

When you have finished a letter, read it carefully over, and correct all the errors you can discover. In your last there were some which



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could not, upon an attentive perusal, have escaped your notice, as you shall see when we meet.

I have asked you a great many questions to which I have as yet no answers. When you sit down to write to me, or when you set about it, be it sitting or standing, peruse all my letters and leave nothing unanswered.

Grammatical criticism and a complaint on account of inquiries left unanswered.

*To his daughter Theodora.*

PHILADELPHIA, 8th January, 1794.

I beg, Miss Prissy, that you will be pleased to name a single "unsuccessful effort" which you have made to please me. As to the letters and journals which you *did* write, surely you have reason abundant to believe that they gave me pleasure; and how the deuce I am to be pleased with those you *did not* write, and how an omission to write can be called an "effort," remains for your ingenuity to disclose.

You improve much in journalizing. Your last is far more sprightly than any of the preceding. Fifty-six lines sola was, I admit, an effort worthy of yourself, and which I hope will be often repeated. But pray, when you have got up to 200 lines a lesson, why do you go back again to 120 and 125? You should strive never to diminish; but I suppose that *vis inertiae*, which is often so troublesome to you, does sometimes preponderate. So it is now and then even with your,

A. BURR.

Criticism tempered by commendation, followed by a charge of laziness, from which the writer allowed he was not exempt.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 14th January, 1794.

I really think, my dear Theo, that you will be very soon beyond all verbal criticism, and that my whole attention will be presently directed to the improvement of your style. Your letter of the 9th is remarkably correct in point of spelling. That word "recieved" still escapes your attention. Try again. The words "wold" and "shold" are mere carelessness; "necessery" instead of "necessary" belongs, I suspect, to the same class.

"Ma begs you will omit the thoughts of leaving Congress." "Omit" is improperly used here. You mean *abandon, relinquish, renounce, or abjure* the thoughts, etc. Your mamma, Mr. Leshlie, or your dictionary (Johnson's folio) will teach you the force of this observation. The last of these words would have been too strong for the occasion.

Again commendation and criticism commingled. Theodosia was in her eleventh year.

*To his daughter Theodora.*

PHILADELPHIA, 23d January, 1794.

Io, triumphe! There is not a word misspelled in either your letter or journal, which cannot be said of a single page you ever wrote before. The fable is quite classical, and if not very much corrected by Mr. Leshlie, is a truly surprising performance, and written most beautifully. . . .

Dr. Rush thinks that bark would not be amiss, but may be beneficial if the stomach does not rebuke it, which must be constantly the first object of attention. He recommends either the cold infusion or substance<sup>1</sup> as the least likely to offend the stomach.

Be able, upon my arrival, to tell me the difference between an infusion and decoction; and the history, the virtues, and the botanical or medical name of the bark. Chambers will tell you more perhaps than you will wish to read of it. Your little mercurial disquisition is ingenious and prettily told.

Earnest approval, followed by a prescription for her mother, and a suggestion to consult a medical dictionary for information, preparatory to an examination on his return home.

*To his daughter Theodora.*

PHILADELPHIA, 13th February, 1794.

I received your letter and enclosures yesterday in Senate. I stopped reading the letter and took up the story in the place you directed; was really affected by the interesting little tale, faithfully believing it to

<sup>1</sup> The word "substance" is meaningless in this connection. Burr, probably, meant "decoction," as he asks Theodosia to learn the difference between infusion and decoction.

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have been taken from the —, and was astonished and delighted when I recurred to the letter and found the little deception you had played upon me. It is concisely and handsomely told, and is indeed a performance above your years. . . .

I despair of getting genuine Tent wine in this city. There never was a bottle of real unadulterated Tent imported here for sale. Mr. Jefferson, who had some for his own use, has left town. Good Burgundy and Muscat, mixed in equal parts, make a better Tent than can be bought. But by Bartow's return you shall have what I can get — sooner, if I find a conveyance.

For once, astonished and delighted, with no word of reproof or suggestion of new duties. The wine was for her mother.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 7th March, 1794.

Poor Tom! (a colored man, the slave of Colonel Burr) I hope you take good care of him. If he is confined by his leg, he must pay the greater attention to his reading and writing.

I shall run off to see you about Sunday or Monday; but the roads are so extremely bad that I expect to be three days getting through. I shall bring with me the cherry sweetmeats, and something for Augusta Louise Matilda Theodosia Van Horne. I believe I have not recollected all her names.

Colonel Burr's servants, who were slaves, were all taught to read and write. His theory of education did not discriminate on account of sex or color. Probably Theodosia, in her letters, had called herself by different names.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 31st March, 1794.

I am distressed at your loss of time. I do not, indeed, wholly blame you for it, but this does not diminish my regret. . . . Negligence of one's duties produces a self-dissatisfaction which unfits the mind for everything, and *ennui* and peevishness are the never-failing conse-



quences. . . I shall in a few days (this week) send you a most beautiful assortment of flower seeds and flowering shrubs.

If I do not receive a letter from you to-morrow, I shall be out of all patience. Every day's journal will, I hope, say something of mamma.

Again, regret, reward, and reproof.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 7th June, 1794.

I have received my dear Theo's two little, very little, French letters. The last left you tormented with headache and toothache, too much for one poor little girl to suffer at one time, I am sure; you had doubtless taken some sudden cold. You must fight them as well as you can till I come, and then I will engage to keep them at bay.

Sympathy, an encouragement to fortitude, and the promise of a father's loving care. Theodosia was now motherless.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 4th August, 1794.

We arrived here yesterday after a hot, tedious passage of seven days. We were delayed as well by accidents as by calm and contrary winds. The first evening, being under full sail, we ran ashore at Tappan, and lay there aground, in a very uncomfortable situation, twenty-four hours. With great labor and fatigue we got off the following night, and had scarce got under sail before we missed our longboat. We lost the whole day in hunting for it and so lay till the morning of Wednesday. Having then made sail again, with a pretty strong head wind, at the very first tack the Dutch horse fell overboard. The poor devil was at the time tied about the neck with a rope, so that he seemed to have only the alternatives of hanging or drowning (for the river is here about four miles wide and the water was very rough); fortunately for him, the rope broke, and he went souse into the water. His weight sunk him so deep that we were at least fifty yards from him when he came up. He snorted off the water, and turning around once or twice, as if to see where he was, then recollecting the way to New York, he immediately swam off down the river with all force. We fitted out our longboat in pursuit of him, and at length drove him on shore on



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the Westchester side, where I hired a man to take him to Frederick's. All this delayed us nearly a whole tide more. The residue of the voyage was without accident, except such as you may picture to yourself in a small cabin, with seven men, seven women, and two crying children — two of the women being the most splenetic, ill-humored animals you can imagine. . . . I am quite gratified that you have secured Mrs. Penn's good opinion, and content with your reasons for not saying the civil things you had intended. In case you should dine in company with her, I will apprise you of one circumstance, by a trifling attention to which you may elevate yourself in her esteem. She is a great advocate for a very plain, rather abstemious, diet in children, as you may see by her conduct with Miss Elizabeth. Be careful, therefore, to eat of but one dish; that a plain roast or boiled; little or no gravy or butter, and very sparingly of dessert or fruit: not more than half a glass of wine; and if more of anything to eat or drink is offered, decline it. If they ask a reason — "Papa thinks it is not good for me," is the best that can be given.

It was with great pain and reluctance that I made this journey without you. But your manners are not yet quite sufficiently formed to enable you to do justice to your own character (Theodosia had now entered her twelfth year), and the expectations which are formed of you, or to my wishes. Improve, therefore, to the utmost, the present opportunity; inquire of every point of behavior about which you are embarrassed; imitate as much as you can the manners of Madame De S., and observe also everything which Mrs. Penn says and does.

You should direct your own breakfast. Send Cæsar every morning for a pint of milk for you; and, to save trouble to Madame De S., let her know that you eat at breakfast only bread and butter.

A good story. The second paragraph contains what Parton calls "a dangerous Chesterfieldian taint." An abstemious diet provided.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

ALBANY, 14th August, 1794.

Your invitation to the Z's was, I confess, a very embarrassing dilemma, and one from which it was not easy to extricate yourself. For the future, take it for your rule to visit only the families which you have known me to visit; and if Madame De S. should propose to

you to visit any other, you may tell her what are my instructions on the subject. To the young ladies, you may pretend business or engagements. Avoid, however, giving any offence to your companions. It is the manner of a refusal, much more than the refusal, which gives offence. This direction about your visits applies only to the citizens or English families. You may, indeed it is my wish that you should, visit with Madame De S. all her French acquaintance. . . .

Do you continue to preserve Madame De S's good opinion of your talents for the harp? And do you find that you converse with more facility in the French? These are interesting questions, and your answer to this will, I hope, answer fully all the questions it contains.

A lesson in social etiquette.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

ALBANY, 16th August, 1794.

Let me know whether Mrs. Penn has left town, how often you have been with her, and what passed. I need not repeat my anxiety to know how you and Madame De S. agree, and what progress you make in music, dancing, and speaking French. She promised to give you, now and then, a lesson on the forte-piano. Is she as good as her word?

Having failed in your promise to write by every post, you cannot expect me to return within the month, one promise being founded on the other.

Education still to the fore, and a touch of moral philosophy.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

TROY, 21st August, 1794.

I hope to be on my return on Monday, when you must begin to pray for northerly winds; or, if you have learned to, say mass, that the French Roman Catholics rely on to procure them all earthly and spiritual blessings. By the by, if you have not been to the Roman chapel, I insist that you go next Sunday, if you are not engaged in some other party.

If Burr was irreligious, as is claimed, he seems to acknowledge the efficacy of prayer, and had no objection to his daughter's attendance at church—



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in fact, commended it. How the mists of prejudice and falsehood roll away before the sunlight of truth!

*To his daughter Theodora.*

NEW YORK, 5th January, 1795.

You see me safe arrived in New York. I have passed but one hour at Richmond Hill. It seems solitary and undesirable without you. They are all well and much, very much disappointed that you did not come with me. . . .

Your picture is really like you; still, it does not quite please me. It has a pensive, sentimental air, that of a love-sick maid. Stuart has probably meant to anticipate what you may be at sixteen; but even in that I think he has missed it.

Bartow has grown immensely fat.

She was not at home and, in her absence, even the brush of a great artist could not satisfy a father's longing for his child. In his disappointment he criticised the artist because he had not made her more as his fancy painted her.

*To his daughter Theodora.*

BRISTOL, 14th September, 1795.

You must pay off Meance and Hewlet for their attendance on you and Nathalie. (Nathalie De L'Age was the daughter of a French lady who was once a member of the family of the Princess Lamballe. Nathalie was adopted and educated by Colonel Burr as his child. She married the son of General Sumter, of South Carolina.) They must be paid regularly at the end of each month.

Tell Mr. Martell that I request that all the time he can spare you be devoted to Latin; that I have provided you with a teacher of French, that no part of his attention might be taken off.

Burr has often been accused of being very careless about money matters and always in debt. During his married life, however, his correspondence shows him to have been very careful about paying his household bills, at least, promptly.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 17th September, 1796.

By this post I received a letter from Colonel Ward, requesting leave to remove his family into my house, Richmond Hill. He lives, you may recollect, in the part of the town which is said to be sickly. I could not, therefore, refuse. He will call on you to go out with him. You had better, immediately upon receipt of this, go out yourself and apprise Anthony and Peggy. . . . I beg that when you sit down to write a letter you will begin by putting a date at the top; this will then presently become a habit, and will never be omitted.

I am sorry, very sorry, that you are obliged to submit to some reproof. Indeed, I fear that your want of attention and politeness, and your awkward postures require it. . . . I have often seen Madame at table, and other situations, pay you the utmost attention; offer you twenty civilities, while you appeared scarcely sensible that she was speaking to you; or, at the most, replied with a cold *remercie*, without even a look of satisfaction or complacency. A moment's reflection will convince you that this conduct will be naturally construed into arrogance; as if you thought that all attention was *due* to you, and as if you felt above showing the least to anybody. I know that you abhor such sentiments and that you are incapable of being actuated by them. Yet you expose yourself to the censure without intending or knowing it. I believe you will in future avoid it. Observe how Nathalie replies to the smallest civility which is offered to her. . . .

You will, I am sure, my dear Theodosia, pardon two such grave pages from one who loves you, and whose happiness depends very much on yours.

Theodosia was now in her "teens" and afflicted with the natural *gaucherie* of that period of life. Motherless, away from her father and early companions, in the company of comparative strangers, it is no wonder that she was ill at ease and often awkward.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

CITY OF WASHINGTON, 23d September, 1796.

Your letter of the 17th and one without date (I suppose the 18th) came in this evening. They contain more wit and sprightliness than

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you ever wrote in the same compass, and have amused me exceedingly. But why do you diminish their value by carelessness? There is an omission of one or more words in every sentence. At least I entreat you to read over your letters before you seal them. Some clauses are absolutely unintelligible, though in several I can guess what word you intended.

Again the mixture of commendation and criticism. A witty young girl, not fully educated, is like a trim-built yacht in the hands of an incompetent sailing master. But fortunate Theodosia had for her pilot a loving father to guide her by and over the rocks and shoals of life.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

CITY OF WASHINGTON, 26th September, 1793.

Your letter of the 21st, written, I suppose, at Dr. Brown's, has just come in, and relieves me from a weight of anxiety about your health. . . .

Of attention and tenderness you will receive not only enough, but a great deal too much; and an indulgence to every inattention, awkward habit, and expression, which may lead you to imagine them to be so many ornaments. As to your language, I expect to find it perfectly infantine.

Visit your neighbors B. B. often as you please, taking very great care not to surfeit the family with your charming company, which may happen much sooner than you would be inclined to believe.

The most sarcastic letter Burr ever wrote to his daughter. Its severity may have been deserved, but one cannot help feeling pity for Theodosia. No doubt her friends petted her, the homeless little girl was delighted, and expressed her pleasure with too much exuberance to her stoical father.

*To his daughter Theodosia.*

NEW YORK, 8th February, 1796.

What will you think of the taste of New York when I shall tell you that Miss Broadhurst is not very generally admired here? Such

is the fact. I have contributed my feeble efforts to correct this opinion.

Mat's child shall not be christened until you shall be pleased to indicate the time, place, manner, and name. I have promised Tom that he shall take me to Philadelphia if there be sleighing. The poor fellow is almost crazy about it. He is importuning all the gods for snow, but as yet they don't appear to listen to him.

Your being in the ballette charms me. If you are to practice on Wednesday evening, do not stay away for the expectation of receiving me. If you should be at the ballette, I shall go forthwith to see you.

A quick drop from a bit of society gossip to the christening of a child and the happiness of a slave. Theodosia must have been taking satisfactory lessons in dancing to be qualified to appear in the *ballet*.

*To Theodosia.*

PHILADELPHIA, 23d January, 1797.

You must not "puzzle all day," my dear little girl, at one hard lesson. After puzzling faithfully for one hour, apply to your arithmetic, and do enough to convince the doctor that you have not been idle. Neither must you be discouraged by one unlucky day. The doctor is a very reasonable man and makes all due allowance for the levities as well as for the stupidity of children. I think you will not often challenge his indulgence on either score.

And do you regret that you are not also a woman? That you are not numbered in that galaxy of beauty which adorns an assembly room, coquetting for admiration and attracting flattery? No. I answer with confidence. You feel that you are maturing for solid friendship. The friends you gain you will never lose; and no one, I think, will dare to insult your understanding by such compliments as are most graciously received by too many of your sex. . . .

Never use a word which does not fully express your thoughts, or which, for any other reason, does not please you. Hunt your dictionary till you find one. Arrange a whole sentence in your mind before you write a word of it. . . . I should be mortified — I should be almost offended — if I should find that you had passed over any word in my letters without becoming perfectly acquainted with its meaning, use, and etymology.



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Nearly fourteen years of age and still under the educational harrow. Much more of Wollstonecraft than of Chesterfield in the second paragraph. In fact, she is warned against the compliments of the followers of Chesterfieldian teachings.

*To Theodosia.*

ALBANY, 4th January, 1799.

Your despondency distresses me extremely. It is indeed unfortunate, my dear Theodosia, that we are constrained to be separated. I had never so much need of your society and friendship, nor you, perhaps, of mine. It is a misfortune which I sincerely regret every hour of the day. It is one, however, which you must aid me to support, by testifying that you can support your share of it with firmness and activity. An effort made with decision will convince you that you are able to accomplish all I wish and all you desire. Determination and perseverance in every laudable undertaking is the great point of difference between the silly and the wise. It is essentially a part of your character, and requires but an effort to bring it into action. The happiness of my life depends upon your exertions; for what else, for whom else do I live? . . . It is for my sake that you now labor. I shall acknowledge your advancement with gratitude and with the most lively pleasure. Let me entreat you not to be discouraged. . . .

There is nothing more certain than that you may form what countenance you please. An open, serene, intelligent countenance, a little brightened by cheerfulness, not wrought into smiles or simpers, will presently become familiar and grow into habit. A year will with certainty accomplish it. Your physiognomy has naturally much of benevolence, and it will cost you much labor, which you may well spare, to eradicate it. Avoid, forever avoid, a smile or sneer of contempt; never even mimic them. A frown of sullenness or discontent is but one degree less hateful. You seem to require these things of me, or I should have thought them unnecessary. . . .

I am perpetually stopped in the streets by little and big girls. Where is Miss Burr? Won't she come up this winter? Oh, why didn't you bring her? and so forth.

Nearly "sweet sixteen." An energetic exhortation



to stoicism, fortitude, and enforced cheerfulness. With a home, and father and mother with her, how much happier Theodosia's childhood would have been.

*To Theodosia.*

ALBANY, 11th February, 1799.

You now see that a letter can come from New York in three days; a truth which has been frequently verified by the receipt of my letters. but never before by the despatch of your own.

You charge me with not noticing two of your letters, and that I have not given you any directions about heedlessness. With submission, Miss, you are mistaken. It is true that I have not repeated the word, but I have intimated several things intended to this point. You expect, I presume, that I should treat the subject scientifically, as Duport does his art, and begin by explanation of terms, and then proceed to divide and subdivide the matter, as a priest does a sermon. Such a dose would, I am sure, have sickened you. I have therefore thought it best to give you very little at a time, and watch, as physicians do with potent medicines, the effect produced. When we meet, which I verily believe will be in five or six days after the receipt of this, you shall have as much as I shall find your stomach will bear. . . .

I go to bed between 12 and 1 and rise between 7 and 8. For some reasons to me unknown, I cannot drink a single glass of wine without serious injury; still less can I bear ardent spirits. Of course I am pretty much in the bread and water line. This is the more provoking as I dine out almost every day, and the dinners are really excellent and well dressed, not exceeded in New York. . . . Please to resolve me whether "author" is not of both genders, for I hate the appendix of "ess."

Three days from New York to Albany! — rapid transit for those days. Miss Theodosia had evidently taken her father to task for delinquency in his correspondence, and he retorts. He confesses his love for good dinners, but is condemned to abstinence in both food and drink.



## HER CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION 205

*To Theodosia.*

ALBANY, 20th January, 1800.

Indeed, my dear Theodosia, I have many, many moments of solicitude about you. Remember that occupation will infallibly expel the fœd *œnui*, and that solicitude is the bugbear of fools. God bless and aid thee.

He teaches the "Gospel of Work" and that solicitude leads to useless self-introspection.

*To Theodosia.*

ALBANY, 30th January, 1800.

You reflect, and that is a security for your conduct. Our most humiliating errors proceed usually from inattention, and from that mental dissipation which we call heedlessness. You estimate your situation with great truth. Many are surprised that I could repose in you so great a trust as that of yourself; but I knew that you were equal to it, and I am not deceived. . . . At your age to prefer duty to pleasure when they are in collision, is a degree of firmness rarely exhibited, and therefore, the more calculated to inspire respect. I perceive that I am not very explicit, but you will reflect and discern my meaning. Montesquieu said he wrote to make people think, and not to make them read — and why may not —

A. BURR.

A young woman now nearly seventeen! Her education well advanced, parental confidence in her ability to take care of herself is expressed. Now she is no longer to "read" but to "think." She was married to Colonel Alston in the following year.

It has been seen that in Theodosia's case childhood and education were synonymous. It is so to-day, in many instances, but rarely to so pronounced an extent. The outlines of her mental and moral education were cast in a Spartan mould. She was taught the self-reliance and fortitude of a man,

and it made her the most marked instance of paternal devotion in our country's history. She was the first woman in America to have what may be called a college education. Her personal charm, her amiability, her moral heroism, *and* her educational acquirements entitle her to the designation which we have given her — THE FIRST GENTLE-WOMAN OF HER TIME.



## CHAPTER X

### RICHMOND HILL

**F**EW houses in America have sheltered so many prominent men and women, or experienced more vicissitudes of fortune and use, than the one-time home of Aaron Burr known as Richmond Hill. Its actual location has been fixed officially (68): "Zandt Berg, or Sand Hill, was an elevated range of hills traversing a part of the City of New York through the eighth and fifteenth wards. There were several prominent points on the Zandt Berg. The residence of Abraham Mortier, Commissary in the British Army, was erected about the year 1760 on one extremity of this range. This building was subsequently called the Richmond Hill House. The position of this house was near the present corner of Varick and Charlton streets."

The Republic newspaper (place of publication unknown) gives a coarse wood-cut of what it terms "a shabby ruin." It says: "The old frame house standing on the southwest corner of *Hudson* (?) and Charlton Streets, New York City, is pointed out by old residents as being all that is left of what at one time was the finest residence on Manhattan Island. It is what remains of the celebrated Richmond Hill mansion." The paper states that it came into the possession of Colonel Burr at the time of his

marriage to Mrs. Prevost in 1782, but this statement is manifestly erroneous, as Colonel Burr lived first in Albany. When he came to New York City, after its evacuation by the British in November, 1783, he took a house in Maiden Lane. Vice-president John Adams lived at Richmond Hill in 1789.

A historian of old New York (69) says: "The successor to Vice-president Adams in the tenancy of this estate, and the tenant with whom its name is always most closely associated, was Aaron Burr, to whom was executed a sixty-nine years' lease of the property on May 1, 1797; and who here, before and during his term as Vice-president, lived in the handsome fashion becoming to so accomplished a man of the world."

To quote further from the Republic: "It was here that Aaron Burr passed the most happy years of his life." This statement was undoubtedly founded upon the belief that Colonel Burr took possession in 1782. As Mrs. Burr died in 1794, and Colonel Burr, as we have seen, was separated from his daughter by official and legal duties, his residence there could hardly have been the happiest period of his life.

In a subsequent part of the Republic's article it is stated: "At that time the mansion, a large wooden edifice, with a portico of Ionic columns, stood at what is now *Varick* and Charlton streets; the estate comprising about 160 acres, extended to the water" (the Hudson River).

Mr. Janvier further complicates the point of exact location of the house by substituting "Van Dam" for "Charlton" Street.



**“Richmond Hill.” occupied at various times by Gen.  
Washington, Vice President John Adams,  
and Col. Aaron Burr.**



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Richmond Hill — when any old gentleman thus came skating around it in winters more than seventy years gone by — really it was a hill; the southwestern outjut of the low range called the Zandtberg (that is to say sandhills) which swung away in a long curve from near the present Clinton Place and Broadway to about where Varick and Van Dam streets now cross. The Minetta water expanded into a large pond at the base of the hill, and — to quote the elegant language of an earlier day — “from the crest of this small eminence was an enticing prospect; on the south, the woods and dells and winding road from the lands of Lisenard, through the valley where was Borrowson’s tavern; and on the north and west the plains of Greenwich Village made up a rich prospect to gaze on.”

He gives a picture of Vice-president Adams, Baron Steuben, and Mr. Jefferson.

Later Mr. Vice-president John Adams occupied Richmond Hill, keeping up the establishment on a scale not quite so liberal as that of the Commissioner, perhaps, but with a fitting state and dignity. A glimpse of the interior of this household is given by Gulian C. Verplanck, writing in the *Talisman* for 1829, in his description of a vice-presidential dinner-party: “There, in the centre of the table,” writes Mr. Verplanck, “sat Vice-president Adams in full dress, with his bag and solitaire, his hair frizzled out each side of his face as you see it in Stuart’s older pictures of him. On his right sat Baron Steuben, our royalist republican disciplinarian general. On his left was Mr. Jefferson, who had just returned from France, conspicuous in his red waist-coat and breeches, the fashion of Versailles.”

Mr. William L. Stone, of Mount Vernon, New York, has supplied from one of his scrap-books the following interesting account of Richmond Hill from 1760 to 1841, covering the period of its inception, growth, and decline. Certain inconsistencies with previous statements, or additions, are indicated by parenthetical notes:

In the year 1760, the present Eighth Ward of this city was a rural region of exceeding beauty, in its rich adornment of field and forest,



of limpid ponds and rippling streamlets. In the middle of its area rose a lofty hill, sloping gently up from the east, but descending steeply to the banks of the Hudson. South of the eminence spread the broad savannals and salt marshes known as Lisperard's Meadows; and through them ran the devious stream which served as an outlet from the "Fresh Water" — a stream which was afterwards made a straight water-course along Canal Street. Round the northerly skirts of the hill, in many a wayward reach and murmuring eddy, curved the little brook then known as "Bestaver's Killetje." That was its name long before; and it is of frequent mention in the Dongan Charter of 1686, as a point in the boundary of the Out-ward. It rose just north of the present Washington Square, and meandering along where Minetta and Downing Streets now run, it emptied into the Hudson about the foot of Hammersly Street. In later times this rivulet was called Minetta Water.

The lofty, forest-crowned height between the brook and the Meadows was part of "the King's Farm," held by Trinity Church; and either by purchase or by lease, 1760, it had come into the possession of Abraham Mortier, then (Commissionary) Paymaster-general of the Royal forces in the Colony. It was called Richmond Hill, and in that year, on its highest point, he built him a noble mansion and surrounded it with broad lawns and pleasant walks and gardens.

Of the Paymaster's history during his residence there we have only two slight outlines, in which he and his lady figure. It was the fashion then for society to amuse itself by applying the characters or the dramas, represented at the theatre, to the peculiarities of acquaintance. So when "Laugh and Grow Fat" was put on the New York stage, it was considered well-fitted for the Paymaster. "He was a cheerful old gentleman, but the leanest of all human kind. He was almost diaphanous."

Then, about the same time, Horatio Gates was in London, an officer of the Royal Army, and seeking profitable promotion there. He was so mercenary that Sir Jeffrey Amherst here would have little to do with him. His friends in New York wrote to him, pointing out places for his attention, and particularly that of Paymaster-general. Says one to him, about 1765: "Abraham Mortier goes to England next spring with his *fat lady*. Could you not contrive to get his place? He has made a fortune."

In the spring of 1776 Washington arrived in New York and made

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his headquarters at Richmond Hill. Colonel Aaron Burr arrived from Canada on the 20th of May, and waited on the commander-in-chief there. Washington remained there until after the battle of Brooklyn, and until the retreat of the American Army to Harlem Heights; when his headquarters were removed to the Roger Morris House — the subsequent Jumel Mansion.

It was while Washington had his quarters at Richmond Hill that the famous, or infamous, conspiracy was planned by the Tories and British officials in the city, which nearly succeeded in making him a victim. The design was to poison the General, as well as other American officers, and also to blow up the magazine. One of Washington's body-guard, named Thomas Hickey, had been seduced. He was to be aided by other people in the city, and the plot was frustrated only, it is said, by the faithfulness of the housekeeper, a daughter of the well-known Sam Francis, who discovered and exposed the danger. Governor Tryon and the Mayor, David Matthews, were implicated. Tryon was sheltered on the *Duchess of Gordon*, a British vessel in the harbor; but the Mayor was arrested and sent to prison at Litchfield, in Connecticut, charged with "treasonable practices against the States of America." Hickey was tried and found guilty of "mutiny, sedition, and the worst of practices," and on the 28th of June was hung near the present corner of Grand and Chrystie Streets.

When the British held possession of the city during the Revolution, the Richmond Hill mansion was occupied by various general officers of their army, the last of whom was Sir Guy Carleton, the last commander.

In 1789 the property was in possession of a Mrs. Jephson, and on the assembling of the first Congress, the Vice-president, John Adams, took up his residence in the mansion. The following descriptive letter was written by his wife (Abigail Adams):

RICHMOND HILL, (N. Y.) 27th Sept., 1789.

To Mrs. Shaw:

I write to you, my dear sister, not from the disputed banks of the Potomac, the Susquehanna, or the Delaware, but from the peaceful borders of the Hudson -- a situation where the hand of nature has so lavishly displayed her beauties that she has left scarcely anything for her handmaid, art, to perform.

The house in which we reside is situated upon a hill, the avenue

to which is interspersed with forest trees, under which a shrubbery rather too luxuriant and wild has taken shelter, owing to its having been deprived by death, some years since, of its original proprietor, who kept it in perfect order. In front of the house the noble Hudson rolls his majestic waves, bearing upon his bosom innumerable small vessels, which are constantly forwarding the rich products of the neighboring soil to the busy hand of a more extensive commerce. Beyond the Hudson rises to our view the fertile country of the Jerseys, covered with a golden harvest, and pouring forth plenty like the cornucopia of Ceres. On the right hand, an extensive plain presents us with a view of fields covered with verdure and pastures full of cattle. On the left, the city opens upon us, intercepted only by clumps of trees and some rising ground, which serve to heighten the beauty of the scene, by appearing to conceal a part. In the background is a large flower-garden, enclosed with a hedge, and some very handsome trees. On one side of it is a grove of pines and oaks, fit for contemplation.

"In this path

How long so o'er the wanderer roves, each step  
Shall wake fresh beauties; each last point present  
A different picture, new, and yet the same."

If my days of fancy and romance were not past, I could here find an ample field for indulgence; yet amidst these delightful scenes of nature my heart pants for the society of my dear relatives and friends. I wish most sincerely to return and pass the recess of Congress at my habitation in Braintree, but the season of the year to which Congress had adjourned renders the attempt impracticable. Although I am not the only person who questions their making a Congress again until April, yet the punctuality of Mr. Adams to all public business would oblige him strictly to adhere to the day of adjournment, however inconvenient it might prove to him. He has never been absent from his daily duty in Senate a single hour from their first meeting, and the last month's business has pressed so hard that his health appears to require a recess.

Shall I ask my sister why she has not written me a line since I came to this place? With regard to myself, I own I have been cautious of writing. I know that I stand in a delicate situation. I am fearful of touching upon political subjects; yet perhaps there is no person who feels more interested in them. And upon this occasion I may con-



What now occupies the site of "Richmond Hill."



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gratulate my country upon the late judicial appointments, in which an assemblage of the greatest talents and abilities are united which any country can boast — gentlemen in whom the public have great confidence, and who will prove durable pillars in support of our government.

Mr. Jefferson is nominated for Secretary of State in the room of Mr. Jay, who is made Chief Justice. Thus have we the fairest prospect of sitting down under our own vine in peace, provided the restless spirit of certain characters who foam and fret is permitted only its hour upon the stage, and then no more heard of, nor permitted to sow the seeds of discord among the real defenders of the faith.

Your affectionate sister,

A. A.

In the autumn of 1783 Colonel Aaron Burr came to New York to engage in the practice of law. After a few years (not until 1797), he became the owner or lessee of Richmond Hill, and in Norton's Literary Messenger of twenty years ago (date unknown, probably 1817), we find the following statement: "In the famous lawsuit which has been going on for so long a time between Trinity Church and the heirs of Anneke Jans, who claim this property, Aaron Burr was retained as counsel for the heirs, with hopes of success. But they were greatly surprised at discovering that he had deserted their side of the suit and gone over to Trinity Church, and acquired from that corporation a lease of the whole Richmond Hill property.

Burr here maintained a liberal establishment, and with his wife and two sons, and his own little daughter Theodosia, a happy family circle were gathered within the old halls. (This statment is incorrect, for Burr did not live at Richmond Hill until 1797, when Theodosia was 14.) After the death of his wife, in 1794, his daughter, then eleven years old, and an adopted daughter, still kept up the hospitalities of his home. This adopted daughter was Nathalie De L'Age, who afterwards married a son of General Sumter of South Carolina.

In 1801 Theodosia was married to Governor Alston of South Carolina, and after Burr's fatal encounter with Hamilton in 1804 his rural home passed from his possession. John Jacob Astor purchased, it is said, all of the property but the mansion, and a few acres around it, for one hundred and forty thousand dollars, and in a short time afterward the mansion and the remainder were sold for twenty-five thousand.

Then came to these once cherished halls the years of neglect, of solitude and decay. Afterwards came the spread of population toward the site, and the lofty hill was cut down, and the mansion, humbled from its high estate, at length found itself lowered a hundred feet down, until there it stood, a mere every-day corner house, on the southwest corner of Charlton and Varick Streets.

In 1819 it was occupied as a circus, and it is recorded that Charles M'Donald, the popular clown, and John May were then members of the company. After this it became a public house; then a theatre for a time, and at length a ball-room and garden, known as the Tivoli Gardens.

For many years before and after 1833 the Richmond Hill Theatre was an attractive place of resort for the west-side population. Among those actors who appeared on its stage were John B. Addis, Miss E. Anson, Charles Boniface, Seth Geer, William Henry, Hudson Kirby, David S. Palmer, and others. Mr. and Mrs. John Barnes during their management introduced Italian opera, and we think that at that time (1832) the tenor Montessor, with Pedrotti and Rapetti, appeared before a New York audience.

In 1832 Mary Gannon made her first appearance, at three years of age, as the Daughter of the Regiment. The first Mrs. Hamblin (Miss E. Blanchard) was there in 1836, and Mr. William H. Hamblin in 1837; Van Amburgh in 1833, and Mrs. Sophia Judah made her *début* there. Jean Davenport, afterwards Mrs. F. W. Lander, at the age of eight, made a successful appearance in "Little Pickle."

In 1841 John Charles Freer was manager, but the tide of success flowed in other directions, and at length Richmond Hill and its mansion were lost amid the avalanche of modern brick and mortar.

Parton's description is brief:

"It was a delightful abode, say the old chroniclers; the grounds extending down to the river, and the neighborhood adorned with groves, gardens, ponds, and villas. The site of the old mansion is now the corner of Charlton and Varick Streets. Twenty years ago (1837) a part of the house was still standing and served as a low drinking shop. The vicinity so enchanting in Burr's day presents

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at this time a dreary scene of shabby ungentility."

Mrs. Peacock thus refers to the library at Richmond Hill:

"The library, which bespoke the critical taste of the scholar, and which he had begun to collect as a boy, was a feature of the house, recalled, in after years, by men who had been his guests, as vividly as the brilliant dinner-parties given beneath the same roof by the distinguished Adams and his wife. He (Burr) had his London bookseller, through whom he made constant additions to his collection, for Burr was ever a lover of books, and he recorded in his Journal in his days of exile and want with what pangs he had been obliged to part with some odd volumes he had with him upon discovering that he was again under the necessity of dining."

Another writer recalls the downward career of the old mansion (70):

"The 'Richmond Hill,' another short-lived, feeble attempt to establish a place of amusement remote from the travelled highways, was on Charlton Street, near Varick, then one of the most quiet sections of the city; in fact, beyond the actual limit. Its high-sounding name was derived from the site it occupied, and a portion of the altered building had formerly been the country residence of Aaron Burr, when that schemer was at the full of his political career, and who in his pride had so christened the slight elevation upon which it rested. From the start it (the theatre) proved a wretched undertaking; even the few dead-head 'claqueurs' of the time objected to travel so far from their accustomed



rounds, and as the associations were not worthy of notice by the respectable press."

Perhaps the writer's evident dislike for Colonel Burr led him to vent his feelings upon the theatre named after the Vice-president's residence, but his account of the theatre's failure is entirely at variance with one previously given, supplied by Mr. Stone, whose father, Colonel William Leete Stone, was a Revolutionary officer and a writer of biographical and historical works.

Another historian of New York City adds a few points of interest to well-known facts (71):

"The house at Richmond Hill, Greenwich Village, in which Aaron Burr lived, was a notable resort for the learned and elegant people of New York. It was the same house which General Washington occupied for headquarters in 1776, and in which his life-guardsman, Hickey, tried to poison him. Lord Dorchester and Sir Guy Carleton lived in it during the British occupation, and it was the home of Vice-president Adams. Burr occupied it for a country residence (in 1797) before he was Vice-president. There he entertained Count Volney, Jerome Bonaparte, Talleyrand-Périgord, Louis Philippe, Joseph Brandt the Mohawk Chief, and many other notable foreigners, as well as the leading members of New York's early aristocracy. His daughter Theodosia gave the charm of her unique and lovely personality to the open hospitality of the house. It was there that Burr laid his far-reaching political plans. Jefferson, Madison, and Hamilton all visited and dined there. Mayor Edward Livingston, beloved of the people, was an especially favored guest."

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Parton says that the dinner to Volney, Talleyrand, and other notables was given in Philadelphia and not in New York.

A few words about Colonel Burr's guests may be found interesting. Louis Philippe, who succeeded Louis XVIII as King of France, was born in 1773. He came to America, accompanied by two younger brothers, in 1796. They toured the States for four years, returning to Europe in 1800. He became king in 1816, but was dethroned during the revolution in 1848. He fled to England, where he died in 1850.

Count Volney was a traveler and a novelist. He was born in Anjou, France, in 1757, and died in Paris in 1820. He opposed the Reign of Terror and was imprisoned. When liberated he came to the United States and published a book about its climate in 1803. He returned to France and became a senator. His principal literary work was entitled "The Ruins; or, The Revolutions of Empires." In it he pictured himself at Palmyra and all the governments of the world passed in review before him.

The career of Jerome Bonaparte is better known. Born in 1784, he came to the United States in his nineteenth year. He met, wooed, and married Miss Elizabeth Patterson, of Baltimore, the ancestress of our American Bonapartes. Napoleon opposed the match, declared it null and void, and Jerome, in order to become a short-lived king, married a princess.

Mrs. Peacock writes that when Jerome first met Miss Patterson "she was radiantly beautiful in a



gown of buff silk with a lace fichu and a Leghorn hat with tulle trimmings and black plumes." Madame Bonaparte sailed for Lisbon with her husband, but she was not allowed to land. The Emperor Napoleon's ambassador asked her what he could do for her. She replied: "Tell your master that Madame Bonaparte is ambitious and demands her rights as a member of the Imperial family." The newly married couple parted there, never to meet again as man and wife. Jerome, after his marriage with the daughter of the King of Württemberg, invited Elizabeth to come to Westphalia, of which he had been made king. He said he would give her a home, the title of Princess, and a pension of two hundred thousand francs a year. She replied that Westphalia was not large enough for two queens, and as she had already accepted Napoleon's annuity of sixty thousand francs, she preferred "being sheltered under the wing of an eagle, to being suspended from the bill of a goose." Napoleon was pleased with this witticism and asked her, through the French Ambassador, what she would like. She replied that she wished to be a duchess. Napoleon promised her the title, but failed to keep his word.

Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord was born in 1754 and died in 1838. He wished to join the army, but family influence forced him to become a bishop, and a most discreditable one he was. He affiliated at first with the Court party, then he became a Republican; next he became a Bonapartist and a devoted adherent of Napoleon; later he again joined the Court party and received the abdica-



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tion of the great conqueror whose former friend he had been.

One of his biographers thus paints his character (72): "He possesses the financial abilities of a Sully, the political capacity and duplicity of a Richelieu, the cunning and capacity of a Mazarin, the commercial knowledge of a Colbert, the insensibility and cruelty of a Louvois, the profligacy and depravity of Dubois, the method and perspicuity of a Fleury, the penetration of Choiseul, the suppleness of Maurepas, and the activity of Vergennes." He was evidently a great man, for his biographer says: "Nature had bestowed on Talleyrand a first-rate genius." Yet "the immorality of his private life accompanied him in his public station." He was a seducer and a libertine. Club-footed, like Lord Byron, from his birth, he banished the sense of his deformity "by insinuating manners, obliging attentions, and an agreeable conversation." He personally caused the death of many persons, including women, and betrayed his friends, but he has never been called "a murderer," "an assassin," or "a traitor." The French people must be more tolerant, more forgiving, than our own. They are seemingly in accord with Mrs. Gertrude Ather-ton, who thinks, or rather argues, that great abilities are accompanied by great faults, and that, like fractions in arithmetic, one cancels the other, at least in part, leaving the preponderance to the credit of the genius. This argument will be of service in the future.

Joseph Brandt, a Mohawk chief, was born about 1742 and died in 1807. He was educated at a school

in Connecticut and translated portions of the New Testament and the Prayer Book into his native tongue. He never really loved the English and was implicated in the Cherry Valley massacre. His life was written by Colonel William Leete Stone. Brandt's son joined the English and fought against the United States in the War of 1812.

Brandt visited New York in 1797 and called upon Colonel Burr, in company with a clergyman and some distinguished public men. Colonel Burr was absent, but Theodosia, the youthful hostess, in her fourteenth year, who had, even then, the charm and brightness of mature womanhood, entertained the party at dinner. The chief, in fact the entire company, was delighted with her gracious manners. "Miss Theodosia," says Col. William L. Stone, who derived the information from Burr himself, "received the forest chief with all the courtesy and hospitality suggested, and performed the honors of her father's house in a manner that must have been as gratifying to her absent parent as it was creditable to herself."

"Miss Burr, after she became Mrs. Alston, visited the Chief at Grand River, in company with her husband. Seeing that when Brandt saw her in New York 'she was very young and had assumed a new name,' Governor Clinton gave the young married couple a cordial letter of introduction to the Chief (73)"

A modern writer condenses Theodosia's childhood, education, and social *début* into three paragraphs (74):



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Aside from his concerns of law and land, Aaron devotes a deal of thought to little Theodosia — child of his soul's heart! In his pride he hurries her into Horace and Terence at the age of ten, and later sends her voyaging to Troy with Homer, and all over the world with Herodotus. Nor is this the whole tale of baby Theodosia's evil fortunes. She is taught French, music, drawing, dancing, and whatever else might convey a gloss. Love-led, pride-blinded, Aaron takes up the role of father in its most awful form.

"Believe me, my dear," he says to Theodosia *mère*, who pleads for an educational leniency — "believe me, I shall prove in our darling that women have souls, a psychic fact high ones have been heard to dispute."

At the age of twelve the book-burdened little Theodosia translates the Constitution into French at Aaron's request; at sixteen she finds celebration as the most learned of her sex since Voltaire's *Emilie*. Theodosia *mère*, however, is spared the spectacle of her harrowing erudition, for in the middle of Aaron's term as senator a cancer carries her off. With that loss, Aaron is more and more drawn to baby Theodosia; she becomes his earth, his heaven, and stands for all his tenderest hopes. While she is yet a child, he makes her the head of Richmond Hill, and gives a dinner of state, over which she presides, to the limping Talleyrand and Volney with his "Ruins of Empire." For all her precocities, and that hot-house bookishness which should have spoiled her, baby Theodosia blossoms roundly into womanhood — beautiful as brilliant.

The light of the house departed when Theodosia was married and went to her southern home. Burr tried to make imagination take the place of reality, as is pleasantly shown in Parton's account of a birthday party given to "the absent one." The description of the occasion is based upon a letter written by Burr to his daughter.

On June 23d (the very day upon which it became certain that the affair with Hamilton could only be terminated by a duel) Theodosia's birthday came round again, a day on which Richmond Hill, for many years, had known only the sights and sounds of happiness and mirth.



Burr was an observer of fête days and family festivals. On this occasion he invited a party to dinner, who, as he wrote the next day to Theodosia, "laughed an hour and danced an hour and drank her health." He had her picture brought into the dining-room and placed at the table where she was accustomed to sit. "But," he added, "as it is a profile and would not look at us, we hung it up and placed Nathalie's (his adopted daughter) at table, which laughs and talks with us." The letter in which these particulars are given is remarkable for containing a suggestion which has since been admirably improved. "Your idea," wrote he, "of dressing up pieces of ancient mythology in the form of amusing tales for children is very good. You *yourself* must write them. Send your performances to me, and within three weeks after they are received, you shall have them again in print. This will be not only an amusing occupation, but a very useful one to yourself."

From the age of fourteen until her marriage, Theodosia was, as Parton says, "the engaging mistress of his household, the companion of his leisure, the friend of his mind." When public feeling was aroused against him, after his duel with Hamilton, when he stood in the temple of justice at Richmond, charged with treason, while detained in Europe by the personal hostility of political enemies, when he reached his native land again and was treated as a social and political outcast — through all, his daughter was "his eloquent, persistent, fearless, indomitable champion."

We have but to change a Christian name in Byron's "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" to express Burr's regard for her:

Theodosia! "Sole daughter of my house and heart."



## CHAPTER XI


### HER COURTSHIP AND MARRIED LIFE

**W**HETHER it was a fact or the vagary of some writer cannot be determined by any evidence obtainable, but the statement has been made that Washington Irving was, at one time, in love with Theodosia Burr. It is well known that Peter Irving, his brother, was a friend of Colonel Burr, and one whose friendship was tried and not found wanting. Washington Irving was, no doubt, one of the visitors at Richmond Hill, and must have met Theodosia. He went to Richmond to attend Burr's trial, and wrote letters in which he expressed his interest in, and sympathy for, the distinguished prisoner at the bar. He was also a great friend of Judge Van Ness, who was Burr's second in the duel with Hamilton, and her father's most intimate friend.

When we consider this possible condition of affairs, those words of Whittier's, "It might have been," strike us most forcibly. If Theodosia had married Irving and settled down in New York, what a mistress of Sunnyside she would have made — what a companion for the man who laid the foundations of American authorship, and built them so well and so enduringly.

Edward Everett, in a review of "Bracebridge Hall,"





in the *North American Review*, said: "We can scarce express the delight with which we turn to the definite images such a work excites, from the vagueness and generality of ordinary story-writing, where personages without prototypes in any society on earth can speak a language learned out of books, without a trait of nature, life, or truth."

Mary Russell Mitford, in her "Recollections of a Literary Life," writes: "I know of no books that are lent oftener than those bearing the pseudonym of Geoffrey Crayon. Few, very few, can show a long succession of volumes so pure, so graceful, and so varied as Mr. Irving."

The English reviewers vied with each other in expressing words of commendation. John Neal, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, thus referred to the *Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon*: "The *Sketch Book* is a beautiful work; with some pathos in it; some rich, pure, bold poetry; some courageous writing; some wit, and a world of humor, so happy, so natural, so altogether unlike that of any other man, dead or alive, that we would rather have been the writer of it, fifty times over, than of everything else he has written."

Lord Jeffrey, in the *Edinburgh Review*, thought Irving's "Life and Voyages of Columbus" would "supersede all former works on the same subject, and never be itself superseded." "Irving," said the *Westminster Review*, "has the finish of our best writers; he has the equality and gentle humor of Addison and Goldsmith."


"It may be doubted if there is in the language a more delightful or more perfectly sustained piece

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of drollery than "The History of New York," is the opinion of Chambers' Encyclopædia, which added: "As Lord Chesterfield said of the witty scintillations of the Dean of St. Patrick's, 'He that hath any books in the three kingdoms hath those of Swift,' so say we, 'He that hath any books in this great republic should have those of Irving.'"

Washington Irving was born in New York City on the 3d of April (1782). He was nearly fifteen months older than Theodosia. His first literary effort, over the signature of "Jonathan Oldstyle," first appeared in the Morning Chronicle, of which his brother Peter was editor. Irving decided to become a lawyer; he studied with Joseph Ogden Hoffman, and opened an office in his native city. His first and only "case" is thus described (75): "It is said that he was never unfortunate enough to have but one client, and his cause he was altogether too diffident to manage; and so, turning over both client and cause to one of his brethren who had less modesty, he left the profession in disgust, and — what thanks does not the world owe him? — decided to pursue the more flowery path of literature."

Why have we written this? Why have we wandered from historical facts to the realms of imagination? Because we wish that what might have been, had been. We wish that Theodosia had become mistress of Sunnyside. With the protecting loves of husband and father, and her presence with them both, we should have been spared the wrangle with Jefferson, the deadly affair at Weehawken, and the mystery of the Ohio River Island.



Theodosia would not have suffered from malaria, induced by the proximity of the sodden rice swamps to her dwelling; there would have been no stories of storms and pirates and loss at sea, and Washington Irving would have been a proud and happy man with such a wife. This is all fanciful, but it is an antidote for too much prosaic fact.

One more picture. Come with us to Sunnyside, in the company of a sympathetic writer (76):

In the library we find many things as he left them. Of all the treasured possessions none is so eloquent as the brown quill pen — rusty with the ink left upon it after the writing of the last word traced by Irving's hand. The eye often wanders back to it as we move about among the books and pictures gathered in the plain room with its low ceiling and casement windows. Over the fireplace is a large painting of Washington Irving, and the walls are hung with odd drawings of himself and his characters. Of great interest is the portfolio beside his desk, containing sketches by Washington Allston — the original Darley illustrations for Irving's books — and autograph pictures of William Cullen Bryant, and other authors. The bookcases, wherein the novels of Washington's friend, Sir Walter Scott, occupy a prominent place, are suggestive of the days when Irving strolled along the banks of the Hudson seeking a sheltered nook in which to enjoy these well-worn volumes. Perhaps there is no better indication of character than the books a man accumulates. Certain it is that one need look no farther than these shelves to know that Irving's taste was for the best, though everything in the room betokens the refinement that characterized his life.

As we leave the library, the impression of culture follows us and still lingers as we stand upon the black and white squares of the marble doorstep between two little old seats overhung with vines. From this point a magnificent sweep of river, hill, and dale delights the eye, and one cannot help wondering how Irving, with his romantic nature, could live in such a place and not write poetry. Everything is conducive to the courting of the muse, from the ivy-clad peaks of the graystone dwelling to the glorious Hudson panorama; but though he keenly appreciated the charm of it all, poetical inspiration seemed to be lacking.

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However, if Irving did not write poetry, he has made *Sunnyside* a poem in itself. Endowed with great natural beauty, cultivated by the hand of taste, and hallowed by the presence of the genial author, its atmosphere is classic, and it is with reluctant steps that we leave the green-gabled house among the stately trees.

A modern writer draws a pessimistic but truthful picture of the social condition of the young woman of a century ago (77). "Let the reader put himself in the place of the girl or young woman of a century ago. Rich or poor, in city or country, she could expect no education much beyond the three R's and a few accomplishments. She could hope to earn money for herself only as an inferior — as a domestic servant or a dressmaker. She could look forward only to dependence, to a slavery — voluntary, happy, and easy, perhaps, but none the less a slavery — as a wife. She must take whatever husband she could get, and take whatever he chose to give. Her happiness and welfare must be staked on one throw of the die — marriage. She was expected to give all her thought and energy to housekeeping."

Theodosia had tread the path of knowledge far beyond the three R's, and had many accomplishments, but there were only two paths open to her — life with her father, or marriage. She chose to marry, and she made a good choice of a husband.

The letter which follows was written by a member of the Alston family. It was dated "Fairfield, Waccamaw (South Carolina), April 10, 1895."

I send you herewith a few facts of the life of Governor Joseph Alston, which you may use in any form which may suit your purpose. I enclose also a copy of the epitaph on his tombstone in the family burying-

ground at "The Oaks" plantation on the Waccamaw River. So many valuable libraries and records were destroyed or stolen in this part of the country during the Confederate War, that I have not been able to find any of his messages or speeches. I am sorry that I have so little of interest to tell you about him. Governor Alston spelled his name with one "l"; the artist's branch with two. I do not know that our family was at all related to Lemuel Alston or the Alstons of North Carolina.

I send you a paper just published by the Colonial Dames. I have marked two paragraphs. The Colonial house described by Quincy was afterwards owned by Governor Joseph Alston's father, Colonel William Alston, whose second wife was the daughter of Mrs. Rebecca Motte.

In *The Meteor*, the Colonial Dames' supplement to the Charleston, S. C., News and Courier, were several extracts from a journal written by Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts, who visited South Carolina in 1773. The book is a very rare one. The first extract relates to a dinner attended by Mr. Quincy:

"March 8. Dined with a large company at Miles Brewton's, Esq., a gentleman of very large fortune. A superb house, said to have cost 8,000 pounds sterling. Politics started before dinner. At Mr. Brewton's sideboard was very magnificent plate. A very fine bird kept familiarly playing about the room, under our chairs and the table, picking up the crumbs, and perching under the window and sideboard."

The second extract describes Miles Brewton's beautiful home:

"A stately old house, one of the few fine specimens of colonial domestic architecture remaining in the city, now owned by Miss Pringle. Many historic interests attach to it. Built by Miles Brewton, not long before the Revolution, it passed, on his death, into the possession of his sister, Mrs. Motte,

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and has descended, always in the female line, to its present owner. During the British occupation of Charleston it was used as headquarters, and it was in its beautiful drawing-room that Lord Rawdon refused the petition of the ladies of Charleston, offered by them in person, for the release of Colonel Nathan Hale. It was in this house that the first meeting to discuss resistance to the Crown was held."

The third extract from Mr. Quincy's journal gives an account of his visit to "The Oaks," the plantation of Mr. Joseph Alston on the Waccamaw:

"March 23. — Spent the night at Mr. Joseph Alston's, a gentleman of immense income, all of his own acquisition. His plantations, negroes, gardens, etc., are in the best order I have ever seen. He has propagated the Lisbon and Wine Island grapes with great success. I was entertained with true hospitality and benevolence by his family. His good lady filled a wallet with bread, biscuit, wine, fowl, and tongue, and presented it to me next morning. The wine I declined, but gladly accepted the rest. At 12 o'clock, in a sandy pine desert, I enjoyed a fine repast, and having met with a refreshing spring, I remembered my worthy host, Mr. Alston, and his lady with a warmth of affection and hearty benisons. Mr. Alston sent his servant as our guide between thirty and forty miles, much to our preservation from many vexations and difficulties."

The writer of the letter on page 227, *ante*, supplied the following interesting account of Colonel Alston and his ancestors:

The ancestors of Governor Joseph Alston were among the first settlers in Georgetown County, South Carolina. His great-grand-

father was William Alston, who died in 1743, leaving many children. From one of these (William) was descended Washington Allston, the artist; from another (Joseph Alston of "The Oaks") was descended Governor Joseph Alston. The first Joseph Alston was a gentleman of large fortune and great intelligence, who did much to settle and improve the Parish of All Saints, Waccamaw, in which he lived. He is mentioned in Josiah Quincy's Diary in 1773. He died when his grandson was a boy, but discerning his rare talents, he left him his valuable estate "The Oaks," with the strict injunction in his will that he should have the most liberal education. The father of Governor Joseph Alston was William Alston, a Captain under General Marion during the Revolution, and his mother was Mary Ashe, first wife of William Alston, and a daughter of General Ashe of North Carolina, after whom the city of Asheville was named. The second wife of William Alston was a daughter of Mrs. Rebecca Motte. After receiving a careful education, Joseph Alston studied law in the office of Edward Rutledge, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, who predicted for him a brilliant future. He commenced the practice of the law, but, having a large fortune, soon gave it up and devoted himself to politics. At a very early age he was elected to the Legislature and made a speaker of the House, and in 1812, Governor of the State, but death cut short his career at the age of 37. He was amiable in manner, and as fluent in conversation as in debate, and wrote poetry with as much ease as prose. His house at "The Oaks" was destroyed by fire many years ago, and the estate suffered much from the ravages of the Confederate War — it has now passed out of the hands of his family, who only retain the right to the burial ground and a few odd volumes of the once very handsome library of classical English and French books. It is a subject of great regret to his relatives that they have no likeness of him. The only one ever taken was in a large family group, which was stolen from the residence of one of his brothers during the Confederate War. The fate of his wife, Theodosia Burr Alston, will forever be wrapped in mystery, but Governor Alston and the family always thought that the schooner *Patriot*, in which she sailed for New York to visit her father, foundered at sea with all on board, in the severe gale which occurred the day after she left Georgetown, and disbelieved all the sensational stories of her having been captured by pirates.

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Another member of the Alston family, in a letter from Petigou, South Carolina, of date November 8, 1894, wrote:

Governor Joseph Alston was a distant relative of mine, being the son of my grandmother's first cousin, and the grandson of my great-grandfather's first cousin. . . . Governor Alston took a prominent part in abolishing the property qualification for others in which he was opposed by many of his own relatives, my own immediate relatives being among the number, and the contest in the Parish of All Saints in Georgetown County, where he and they resided, gave rise to several duels. I remember being told that at his inauguration as Governor, at Columbia, his coach was drawn by four white mules. His father was prominent on the turf, and owned many of the most favored racers of the day. He deserved a biography, but I know of none, and any private records would probably be in the possession of his more immediate family. I do not remember to have ever seen a portrait of him, nor do I know if one exists.

A short reference to Colonel Alston is found in a recent work relating to the Alston family (78).

Colonel Joseph Alston was a man of more than ordinary ability and great popularity in the State. His connection with Theodosia Burr, and her ultimate loss at sea, are of historic record and need not be dwelt upon at length. He married her in 1801, when Aaron Burr was at the height of his popularity, having just been elected to the Vice-presidency. Her education, under the personal supervision of her father, had been conducted with the utmost care; thus with natural quickness of perception and aptitude for learning, she became one of the most accomplished women of the day. To this was added personal beauty and attractiveness, rare ease and grace of manner, with strict observance of the proprieties of life. She had an only son, Aaron Burr Alston.

Theodosia's masculine education had made her argumentative. Besides, she had been separated a great deal from her father, and she wished to enjoy his society. It is no wonder, then, that when



Colonel Alston proposed, although he was accepted, there was a proviso that the wedding should be postponed for a year at least. She was opposed, or professed to be opposed, to early marriages, and in a letter to her fiancé wrote: "Aristotle says that 'a man should not marry before he is six-and-thirty'; pray, Mr. Alston, what arguments have you to oppose such authority?"

To this challenge Colonel Alston replied at great length, incorporating a veritable legal argument, philosophy, poetry, geography, and social laudation and criticism in a manner that would have been bewildering to a young woman less fully educated than Theodosia. We present the main features of his argument, which show that as a lover he was certainly no laggard.

CHARLESTON, S. C., December 28, 1800.

Hear me, Miss Burr.

It has always been my practice, whether from a natural independence of mind, from pride, or what other cause I will not pretend to say, never to adopt the opinion of anyone, however respectable his authority, unless thoroughly convinced by his arguments; the "*ipse dixit*," as logicians term it, even of Cicero, who stands higher in my estimation than any other author, would not have the least weight with me; you must, therefore, till you offer better reasons in support of his opinion than the Grecian sage himself has done, excuse my differing from him.

Objections to early marriages can rationally only arise from want of discretion, or want of fortune in the parties; now, as you very well observe, the age of discretion is wholly uncertain, some men reaching it at twenty, others at thirty, some again not till fifty, and many not at all; of course, to fix such or such a period as the proper one for marrying is ridiculous. Even the want of fortune is to be considered differently according to the country where the marriage is to take place; for though in some places a fortune is absolutely necessary to a man before he

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marries, there are others, as in the eastern states, for example, where he marries expressly for the purpose of making a fortune.

But, allowing both these objections their full force, may there not be a single case that they do not reach? Suppose (for instance, merely) a young man nearly two-and-twenty, already of the *greatest* discretion, with an ample fortune, were to be passionately in love with a young lady almost eighteen, equally discreet with himself, and who had a "sincere friendship" for him, do you think it would be necessary to make him wait till thirty? particularly where the friends on both sides were pleased with the match.

Were I to consider the question personally, since you allow that "individual character" ought to be consulted, no objection certainly could be made to my marrying early.

From my father's plan of education for me, I may properly be called a hot-bed plant. Introduced from my infancy into the society of men, while yet a boy I was accustomed to think and act like a man. On every occasion, however important, I was left to decide for myself. I do not recollect a single instance where I was controlled even by advice; for it was my father's invariable maxim, that the best way of strengthening the judgment was to suffer it to be constantly exercised. Before seventeen, I finished my college education; before twenty, I was admitted to the bar. Since that time I have been constantly travelling through different parts of the United States; to what purpose, I leave you to determine.

From this short account of myself, you may judge whether my manners and sentiments are not, by this time, in some degree formed.

But let us treat the subject abstractedly; and, as we have shown that under particular circumstances no disadvantages result from early marriages, let us see if any positive advancement attend them.

Happiness in the marriage state, you will agree with me, can only be obtained from the most complete congeniality of mind and disposition, and the most exact similarity of habits and pursuits; now, though their natures may generally resemble, no two persons can be entirely of the same mind and disposition, the same habits and pursuits, unless after the most intimate and early association; I say *early*, for it is in youth only the mind and disposition receive the complexion we would give them; it is then only that our habits are moulded or our pursuits directed as we please; as we advance in life, they become fixed and unchangeable, and instead of our governing them, govern

us. Is it not, therefore, better, upon every principle of happiness, that persons should marry young, when, directed by mutual friendship, each might assimilate to the other, than wait till a period when their passions, their prejudices, their habits, etc., become so rooted that there neither exists an inclination nor power to correct them? Dr. Franklin, a very strong advocate for my system, and, I think, at least as good authority as Aristotle, very aptly compares those who marry early to two young trees joined together by the hand of the gardener:

"Trunk knit with trunk, and branch with branch entwined,  
Advancing still, more closely they are joined;  
At length, full grown, no difference we see,  
But, 'stead of two, behold a single tree!"

Those, on the other hand, who do not marry till late, say "thirty," for example, he likens to two ancient oaks:

"Use all your force, they yield not to your hand,  
But firmly in their usual stations stand;  
While each, regardless of the other's views,  
Stubborn and fix'd, it's natural bent pursues!"

But this is not all; it is in youth that we are best fitted to enjoy that exquisite happiness which the marriage state is capable of affording, and the remembrance of which forms so pleasing a link in that chain of friendship that binds to each other two persons who have lived together any number of years. Our ideas are then more refined; every generous and disinterested sentiment beats higher; and our sensibility is far more alive to every emotion our associate may feel. Depend upon it, the man who does not love till "thirty" will never, never love; long before that period he will become too much enamoured of his own dear self to think of transferring his affections to any other object. He may marry, but interest alone will direct him in the choice of his wife; far from regarding her as the sweetest friend and companion of his life, he will consider her but as an unavoidable incumbrance upon the estate she brings him. And can you really hope, my dear Theodosia, with all your ingenuity, to convince me that such a being will enjoy equal happiness in marriage with me? with me about to enter into it with such rapture; who anticipates so perfect a heaven from our uniting in every study, improving our minds together, and informing

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each other by our mutual assistance and observations? No — I give you full credit for your talents, but there are some causes so bad that even you cannot support them.

Theodosia wrote to her lover on January 13, 1801, but although sixteen days had elapsed, his reply to her challenge had not reached her. It will be seen that she capitulated in advance by saying "to your solicitations I yield my judgment"; or, in other words, "I surrender, but I am right."

NEW YORK, January 13, 1801.

I have already written to you by the post to tell you that I shall be happy to see you whenever you choose; that, I suppose, is equivalent to *very soon*; and that you may no longer feel doubts or suspicions on my account, I repeat the invitation by a packet as less dilatory than the mail. But for all these doubts and suspicions I will take ample revenge when we meet.

I yesterday received your letter of the 26th December, and am expecting your defence of early marriages to-day. My father laughs at my impatience to hear from you, and says I am in love; but I do not believe that to be a fair deduction, for the post is really very irregular and slow — enough so to provoke anybody.

We leave this for Albany on the 26th inst., and shall remain there until the 10th of February. My movements after that will depend upon my father and you. I had intended not to marry this twelve-month, and in that case thought it wrong to divert you from your present engagements in Carolina; but to your solicitations I yield my judgment. Adieu. I wish you many returns of the century.

P. S. I have not yet received your promised letter; but I hope it may be long in proportion to the time I have been expecting it. The packet has been delayed by head winds, but now that they are fair, she will have a quick passage; at least, such I wish it. Adieu, encore.

THEODOSIA.

The first announcement of the wedding was in the New York Commercial Advertiser of February 7, 1801:

*"Married* — At Albany, on the 2d instant, by the Rev. Mr. JOHNSON, JOSEPH ALSTON, of South Carolina, to THEODOSIA BURR, only child of AARON BURR, Esq. (79)."

Parton thus refers to the marriage: "And Theodosia was married. While the politicians supposed that Colonel Burr was full of the alleged tie negotiation, and some of them imagined that he was intriguing with all his might for the Presidency, he was, in reality, occupied with the marriage of his daughter with Joseph Alston of South Carolina, which occurred while the great question was pending."

Mrs. Peacock tells of events subsequent to the marriage (80):

In February, 1801, a few months before she was eighteen, Theodosia was married to Joseph Alston, of South Carolina. He also was young, being but twenty-two, and wealthy, possessing extensive rice plantations, talented and ambitious, though as yet without a specific object on which to expend these qualities. He had studied law and been admitted to the bar, though he had not begun to practise. Upon Burr's suggestion he entered upon a political career, rising eventually to the governorship of his State.

Theodosia argued for a deferment of the marriage, quoting Aristotle, that a man should not marry till he was thirty-six. With convincing eloquence and ardor, Alston replied, winning his suit, notwithstanding Aristotle and other equally eminent authorities.

On February 7, 1801, the New York Commercial Advertiser announced the marriage, which had taken place on the 2d, at Albany, where the Legislature, of which Burr was then a member, was in session. It was a period of intense excitement throughout the country, and the names of Jefferson and Burr were in all mouths. The people of the country had cast a tie vote, which threw the election into the House of Representatives. Party spirit manifested itself for the first time in the young republic, and the strength of the Constitution was nearly put to a severe test.

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Theodosia, on her way to her new home in the South, stopped in Washington, where, on the 4th of March, she saw her father inducted into the Vice-presidency.

Her marriage and her father's new honors inaugurated for her three years of absolute happiness. Though her husband's home and her father's were a journey of twenty days apart, she went frequently back and forth, and though she wrote to her husband during one of her early visits to her old home, "Where you are, there is my country, and in you are centered all my wishes," she was undoubtedly in better health and spirits when in her northern home. Her winters were passed in Charleston, where she was well received and much beloved, and where she became an important factor in her husband's political success.

Theodosia had a honeymoon. One week of it was passed in Albany, her father, at that time, being a member of the New York Legislature. Thence to New York to the old home — Richmond Hill. The stay there was short, and on the 28th of February they were met at Baltimore by Colonel Burr, who had written her from Albany that he would overtake her by that date.

The next step was to Washington, where the young couple witnessed the inauguration of Jefferson as President and the induction of Burr as Vice-president. Then came the parting between father and daughter — as long deferred as possible, but now imperative. On the 8th of March Burr wrote to his daughter: "Your little letter from Alexandria assured me of your safety, and for a moment consoled me for your absence. The only solid consolation is the belief that you will be happy, and the certainty that we shall often meet."

On March 11 he wrote to her again from Washington: "Nothing but matrimony will prevent my

voyage to Charleston and Georgetown." He wrote again on March 29, from New York: "At Philadelphia I saw many, many who inquired after you with great interest. . . . I approached home as I would approach the sepulchre of all my friends. Dreary, solitary, comfortless. It was no longer home. . . . We conclude that you got home on the 16th (March). It has been snowing here this whole day most vehemently. You are blessed with 'gentler skies.' May all other blessings unite."

In his letter of April 15, 1801, from New York, he said: "Your letters of the 24th and 25th March, received yesterday, give me the first advice of your safe arrival at Clifton. The cordial and affectionate reception you have met consoles me, as far as anything can console me, for your absence."

On April 29 he wrote that he had given up all hope of coming South to see her. Theodosia had been remiss in her correspondence, and the *Teacher* Burr objected. He said her last letter reminded him of one written by a French lady to her husband. It ran thus: "My dear husband: I write you because I have nothing to do; I finish because I have nothing to say." He continued: "By this vessel I send two dozen pairs of long colored kid gloves, and half a dozen of pretty little short ones, for use when you ride horseback. I wish you would often give me orders, that I may have the pleasure of doing something for you or your amiable family."

On May 26, about four months after her marriage, he wrote: "By the time this can reach you, you will be ready to embark for New York. You will find me in Broadway. Richmond Hill will remain



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vacant until your arrival." On August 20 he wrote: "I was so very solicitous that you should see Niagara, that I was constantly filled with apprehension lest something might prevent it. Your letter of the 29th of July relieves me. You had actually seen it. Your determination to visit Brandt gives me great pleasure, particularly as I have lately received a very friendly letter from him, in which he recapitulates your hospitality to him in *ancient days*, and makes very kind inquiries respecting you; all this before he could have entertained the remotest idea of seeing you in his own kingdom."

In his letter of November 3 he said: "It is very kind, indeed, to write me so often. . . . You made two, perhaps more, conquests on your northern tour — King Brandt and the stage-driver; both of whom have been profuse in their eulogies. Brandt has written me two letters on the subject. It would have been quite in style if he had scalped your husband and made you queen of the Mohawks."

Theodosia and her husband must have visited Burr in New York, for in his letter of November 9 he wrote: "It is quite consoling to find that you will have taken the precaution to inquire the state of health before you venture your precious carcass into Charleston. A fever would certainly mistake you for strangers and snap at two such plump, ruddy animals as you were when you left New York."

Burr had been meditating the sale of Richmond Hill for \$140,000. In his letter of November 20, he said: "The sale of Richmond Hill is all off; blown up at the moment of counting the money, partly by whim and partly by accident." Great



events hang on small circumstances. Had Burr sold Richmond Hill and gone to South Carolina, the history of the United States would have been changed greatly.

Theodosia had asked him to send her apples, nuts, lucerne seed, a cook, and a chambermaid. Referring to the chambermaid, he wrote: "That whom I shall send you is a good, steady looking animal, aged 23. From appearance, she has been used to count her beads and work hard, and never thought of love or finery. . . . You are in equal luck with a cook. I have had him on trial a fortnight, and he is the best I ever had in the house; for cakes, pastry, and jimcracks, far superior to Anthony. In short, he is too good for you, and I have a great mind not to send him; you will be forever giving good dinners."

From Philadelphia, on November 26, he sent — "Your reception has, indeed, been charming; it reads more like an extract from some romance than matter of fact happening in the nineteenth century within the United States. . . . Your letter is pretty and lively, and indicates health, content, and cheerfulness, which is much better than if you had told me so, for then I should not have believed a word of it."

In his of December 8, again the literary mentor: "In your reading, I wish you would learn to read newspapers; not to become a partisan in politics. God forbid; but they contain the occurrences of the day, and furnish the standing topics of conversation. . . . With the aid of a gazetteer and atlas, you must find every place that is spoken of."

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If the pupils of our public schools at the present day would follow the excellent plan of reading and reference above outlined, it would remove that lamentable lack of knowledge of geography now so prevalent.

The letter which follows, written on December 13, 1801, would seem to indicate that President Jefferson antedated by more than a century President Roosevelt's remarks on "race suicide." The letter was addressed to Colonel Alston, his son-in-law. "The President's message, of which a copy was sent you by this ship, will have reached you through other channels long before her arrival. One idea contained in the message is much applauded by our ladies. They unite in the opinion that the 'energies of the men ought to be principally employed in the multiplication of the human race,' and in this they promise an ardent and active co-operation. . . . I hope the fair of your State will equally testify their applause of this sentiment; and I enjoin it on you to manifest your patriotism and your attachment to the administration by 'exerting your energies' in the manner indicated.

'To kill is brutal, to create Divine.'"

In writing the above, Colonel Burr was jocose at his son-in-law's expense, as is evidenced by reading President Jefferson's exact words: "I lay before you the result of the census lately taken of our inhabitants. . . . You will perceive that the increase of numbers during the last ten years, proceeding in geometrical ratio, promises a duplication in little more than twenty-two years. We

contemplate this rapid growth and the prospect it holds up to us, not with a view to the injuries it may enable us to do others in some future day, but to the settlement of the extensive country still remaining vacant within our limits, to the multiplication of men susceptible of happiness, educated in the love of order, habituated to self-government, and valuing its blessings above all price."

The population of the United States in 1800 was 5,308,483; in 1820, 9,633,822; in 1830, 12,866,020; so President Jefferson's prognostication was not quite verified in twenty-two years, but more than confirmed by 1830.

Quickly follows a letter to Theodosia on December 15: "Yesterday Mr. Phelps delivered to me two pairs of moccasins, directed — 'From Captain Joseph Brandt to Mr. and Mrs. Alston.' I send you the original letter of Captain Brandt merely to show how an Indian can write. It is his own handwriting and composition. You should write him a letter of acknowledgment for his hospitality. . . . E. has a lover — measures six feet eight inches and a half, shoes off; but so very modest that they will never come to an explanation unless she shall begin."

On January 12, 1802, he wrote: "I have only time before closing of the mail to *send you these few lines, hoping they will find you in good health, as I am at this present time*, etc. A form of salutation to be found in a public letter of Julius Cæsar, and in one of Cicero's familiar epistles."

In that of January 16, 1802, is a reference to the new couple starting housekeeping, and the ques-



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tion of health: "It (yours) will be one of the most cheerful and amiable homes in the United States. I am gratified that you do not start with splendor; to descend with dignity is rare. . . . You must walk a great deal. It is the only exercise you can take with safety and advantage, and, being in Charleston, I fear you will neglect it. I do entreat you to get a very stout pair of over shoes, or short boots, to draw on over your shoes. But shoes to come up to the ankle bone, with one button to keep them on, will be best; thick enough, however, to turn water. The weather has not yet required this precaution, but very soon it will, and I pray you to write me that you are so provided; without them you will not, cannot walk, and without exercise you will suffer in the month of May. To be at ease on this subject, you must learn to walk without your husband — alone — or if you must be in form, with ten negroes at your heels. Your husband will often be occupied at the hours you would desire to walk, and you must not bother him: Oh, never."

His letter of January 22, 1802, complained of Theodosia's failure to write to him regularly: "Five weeks without hearing from you! Intolerable. Now I think to repose myself in sullen silence for five weeks from this date. . . . Tell me that Mari (French for husband) is happy, and I shall know that you are all so. Adieu, my dear little negligent baggage. . . . Do not suffer a tooth to be drawn or any operation to be performed upon your teeth."

The next letter in order was to Colonel Alston,

and congratulated him, in veiled terms, on the expected advent of an heir or heiress.

"Your letter of the 10th January was the first evidence of your existence which I had received for near a month preceding. I hope your wife is allowed the use of pen, ink, and paper. Her letter, three days later, has been also received. The successful 'execution of your energies' is highly grateful to me. It seems probable that I shall pronounce, in person, on the merit of the workmanship somewhere about May day. . . . When you shall be both settled in your own home, I crave a history of *one day*, in the manner of Swift's Journal to Stella; or, as you do not like imitation, in your own manner."

Again to Theodosia on February 2, 1802, the first anniversary of her wedding day; no congratulation, but a touch of sarcasm, and a prophecy of coming trouble in her housekeeping.

"I wish you would teach half a dozen of your Negroes to write; then you might lay on the sofa, and if you could submit to the labour of thinking and dictating, the thing would go on. . . . The cook had only Peggy to aid him; but as Peggy is equal to about forty South Carolina Africans, he is very reasonable if he asks only thirty-five, and ought to be indulged. Your maid will make a miserable housekeeper and be spoiled as a *femme de chambre*, which last character is, I take it, the more important one. . . . I am now going to smoke a segar and pray for you."

Burr did not consider the life of Vice-president an exciting one. He wrote his daughter: "My

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life has no variety, and, of course, no incident. To my feelings your letters are the most important occurrence. I am blessed with three of them in three months. It did not use to be so. . . . I live at Mr. Law's, not nominally, but in fact. Mrs. Madison is distant one mile. Anna Payne (Mrs. Madison's sister) is a great belle. Miss Nicholson (daughter of Commodore James Nicholson and sister of Mrs. Gallatin) ditto, but more retired; frequently, however, at Mrs. Law's.

Reference has been made to the fact that Colonel Alston's father took great interest in horse racing. Theodosia sent her father newspapers containing accounts of some races. Burr replied: "I am very glad that Papa Alston has won once. It is, I am told, the first time in his life."

Burr thus describes an accident: "General Smith's carriage has just ran away with four ladies, viz.: Mrs. Smith, Miss Speare, Miss Smith, and Mrs. Law. Miss Smith was taken up dead and brought home dead; it cannot be discovered that she has received the slightest injury, save being frightened to death, as before mentioned. Miss Speare came off unhurt. Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Law are much bruised. You will, I hope, understand that the horses ran off with the carriage, and not that the carriage, of its own mere motion, ran off with the ladies."

In his of February 27, 1802, to his daughter, the severe schoolmaster: "Your last letter is pleasant and cheerful. Careless, incorrect, slovenly, illegible. I dare not show a sentence of it, even to Eustis. God mend you."

Burr was looking forward to an adjournment of Congress and a vacation to be spent with his daughter: "I could with pleasure have passed the summer with you in the mountains; but the heat and dissipation of Sullivan's Island is not so inviting."

Theodosia was nearly twenty now, but still under the literary domination of her pedagogic father.

"From an accurate attention to the dates of your letters, I discover that you write on Sunday only; that if, by accident or mental indisposition, to which people in warm climates are liable, the business should be put off for that day, it lays over to the next Sunday, and so to a third or fourth, according to exigencies, active or passive. . . . Your last was sealed *on the writing*, a vulgarism which I again condemn."

Burr wished his daughter to go into the mountains before her child was born, but Papa and Mama Alston wished Theodosia to stay with them. He wrote his son-in-law on March 8, 1802: "With her Northern constitution, she will bring you some puny brat that will never last the summer out; but in your mountains, one might expect to see it climb a precipice at three weeks old. . . . I shall come though at your hazard, which, you know, would be a great consolation to me if I should be caught by a bilious fever in some rice swamps."

In his of March 14, 1802, more complaint about her letters, and a very uncomplimentary opinion of his own personal appearance.

"Your last was sealed, as too often before, on the writing. If your Mari (husband) denies you



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a sheet of paper, pray lay out *one* of your four hundred dollars for this purpose. Adieu, my dear child. . . . A lady of rank and consequence, who had a great curiosity to see the Vice-president, after several plans and great trouble, at length was gratified, and she declared that he was the very ugliest man she had ever seen in her life. His bald head, pale hatchet visage, and harsh countenance, certainly verify the lady's conclusion.

Your very ugly and affectionate father,

A. BURR.

On April 5, 1802, Burr wrote his daughter that he was coming South. "My route will be through Richmond and Petersburg to Fayetteville, and thence to Georgetown and Clifton, where I presume I shall find Papa Alston, Ellen, etc. . . . I have ordered Vanderlyn to send you, from New York, both his and Stuart's picture of A. Burr, and I have told him to ship himself for the port of Charleston on the first of May. I have also desired that my beautiful little bust of Bonaparte be sent to Mr. William Alston."

Colonel Burr did actually go South to see his daughter. He arrived at Clifton on May 3, 1802. Theodosia was in Charleston, a day's ride away. So he wrote her: "Unfortunately the stage was full — not even a seat vacant for the Vice-president. I am, therefore, doomed to remain here one day longer, and be two days on the road. . . . William arrived here this afternoon and tells us that you are *well*, and your husband *ill*. This is exactly wrong, unless he means to take the whole



trouble off your hands, as some good husbands have heretofore done; so, at least, Darwin records. God bless thee, my dear Theodosia."

It seems strange that Colonel Burr did not request his daughter, or perhaps command her, to keep a diary during the first year of her married life. If she had done so, we should have had an account more in detail of the occurrences at Charleston, during her trip North, and her life at the Oaks. But by reading between the lines of her father's letters, we can form a good idea of what took place. We know that at first she was welcomed by the highest grade of South Carolina society. She was used to good company—to the best—and undoubtedly was fully at home wherever her husband's relatives and friends were found.

The fine old estate, the Oaks, had been left to Colonel Alston by his grandfather. For the use of the young couple it required refurnishing, and orders for what was needed were sent to Colonel Burr in New York and shipped by him by water, then the speediest means of communication between the North and South. One of Theodosia's orders was for a cook and a chambermaid, and her father took great pleasure in filling it. At the Oaks there were plenty of negro servants. All was in readiness, and now there is an heir to the house of Alston.

The father of the mother—the grandfather of this young scion of a noble family—was Vice-president of the United States. What more natural than that he should bear an honored name, and one that his parents fondly hoped would be

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honored in the future? — that of Aaron Burr Alston.

Colonel Burr was in the South when this interesting event took place. He never loved the rice fields of South Carolina, which he said were full of malaria. It can be inferred that he prevailed upon his daughter to come North as soon as she was able. Whatever argument he may have used, it is a fact that she was in the city of New York on the 24th of June, 1802, at which time she wrote a very interesting letter to her husband.

We arrived yesterday morning, exactly the eighth day since I left you. Our passage was pleasant inasmuch as we had no storms, and the most obliging, attentive captain. I never met with more unre-mitted politeness. He was constantly endeavoring to tempt my appetite by all the delicacies in his own stores. To the child he proved an excellent nurse when I was fatigued and the rest sick. We are now in my father's town house. . . .

I have just returned from a ride in the country and a visit to Richmond Hill. Never did I behold this island so beautiful. The variety of vivid greens; the finely cultivated fields and gaudy gardens; the neat, cool air of the cit's boxes, peeping through straight rows of tall poplars, and the elegance of some gentlemen's seats, commanding a view of the majestic Hudson and the high, dark shores of New Jersey, altogether form a scene so lively, so touching, and to me now so new, that I was in constant rapture. How much did I wish for you to join with me in admiring it. With how much regret did I recollect some rides we took together last summer. Ah, my husband, why are we separated? I had rather have been ill on Sullivan's Island with you, than well, separated from you. Even my amusements serve to increase my unhappiness; for if anything affords me pleasure, the thought that were you here, you also would feel pleasure, and thus redouble mine, at once puts an end to my enjoyment. You do not know how constantly my whole mind is employed in thinking of you. Do you, my husband, think as frequently of your Theo, and wish for her? Do you really feel a vacuum in your pleasures? As for your wife, she has

bid adieu to pleasure till next October. When, when will that month come? It appears to me a century off. I can scarcely yet realise to myself that we are to be so long separated. Do not imagine, however, that I mean to beg you to join me this summer. No, my husband, I know your reasons, and I approve them. Your wife feels a consolation in talking of her sorrows to you; but she would think herself unworthy of you could she not find fortitude enough to bear them. God knows how delighted I shall be when once again in your arms; but how much would my happiness be diminished by recollecting that your advancement and interest suffered. When we meet let there be nothing to alloy a happiness so pure, so unbounded. Our little boy grows charmingly; he is much admired here. The color of his eyes is not yet determined. You shall know when it is. . . .

Have you any rice on hand? It sells here for five dollars cash. If you have any, had you not better send it? Papa intends writing to you on the subject.

I began a letter to you this morning in time for the mail, but was prevented by innumerable visits, which commenced before I was dressed for breakfast. I am most impatiently waiting for a letter from you. I hope you wrote soon after my departure. I am counting every minute to next Wednesday, when I hope to receive one, though I have many fears it is too early. With how much anxiety do I expect a letter. Maybe, one of these days, I will tell you of a piece of weakness of mine on that subject; maybe, for I do not know whether it is quite right for a wife to display all her foibles in that way to her husband. We have not yet determined when or where we shall move in the country. It shall certainly not be long ere we leave the city.

On the 26th of June, 1802, she wrote again to her husband, from New York. In her letter it will be noticed that she asked her husband a question which years before her father, while superintending her education, had asked her.

When, when will the month of October come? It appears to recede instead of approaching; and time, which extinguishes all other sorrows, serves but to increase mine; every moment I feel that I have lost so much of your society which can never be regained. Ah, my husband, what can be pleasure to your Theo, unassisted by the charms of your presence

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and participation? Nothing. It is an idea which has no place in my mind unconnected with you. . . .

If you should do so rash a thing as to visit the city during the summer, pray smoke all the time you remain there; it creates an atmosphere round you, and prevents impure air from reaching you. I wish also that you would never be in town before or after the middle of the day. I have somewhere heard that persons were less apt to catch infectious disorders at that time than any other, and I believe it. Have you never remarked how highly scented the air is before sunrise in a flower-garden, so much so as to render the smell of any flower totally imperceptible if you put it to your nose? That is, I suppose, because, when the sun acts with all his force, the air becomes so rarified, that the quantity of perfume you inhale at a breath can have no effect; while, on the contrary, during the night, the vapours become so condensed that you perceive them in every blast. May not the same be the case with noxious vapours? It is said that the fever in Charleston does not arise from that, but the filth of the streets is quite enough to make one think otherwise. Perhaps I am wrong both in my reason and opinion. If so, you are able to correct; only do as you think best, and be prudent. It is all I ask. I imagine the subject worth a reflection, and you cannot err. Montesquieu says he writes to make people think; and why may not Theodosia? . . .

Our son looks charmingly. Adieu.

THEODOSIA.

The next letter to her husband, written in New York, June 28, 1802, shows that she had not forgotten her father's teaching. She was in a happy mood because she had received a letter from her husband.

Your letter of the 16th, which I received yesterday, delighted me the more as it was unexpected. I did not *hope* you would have written so soon; less did I imagine a letter from Charleston would reach this on the eleventh day after date. How anxious I am for to-morrow. Perhaps I shall hear from you again. . . .

And do you, indeed, miss your Theo? Do you really find happiness indissolubly blended with her presence? Ah, my husband, how much more amiable you are as the man than as the philosopher!

How much better your wife can love you! . . . Believe me, it is a very mistaken idea that to discover sensibility at parting with a friend increases their sorrow. No; it consoles them. That apparent indifference, instead of lessening their pain at separation, only adds to it the mortification of finding themselves alone, wounds their feelings by the idea that, where they expected the most sincere reciprocity, they meet with the most calm tranquillity; and above all, is apt to make them involuntarily exclaim — If I am thus regretted, how little shall I be thought of! How soon forgotten! Never, then, my beloved, attempt to play the philosopher. If you see a friend weeping, weep with them. Sympathy is the sovereign cure for all wounds of the heart. . . .

Pray, write your journal this summer, you have little else to do. I should be charmed to find it finished on my return. Adieu.

The next letter to her husband was from Colonel Burr. Why he wrote instead of Theodosia is explained in the letter. It bore the date of July 3, 1802.

Your letter of the 19th of June, covering two for Theodosia, was received this morning. She, with Lady Nisbett and your boy, sailed yesterday for Red Hook (120 miles North) on a visit to Mrs. A., who had solicited this attention in terms and under circumstances which admitted of no refusal. The boy has grown surprisingly. The mother has recovered her appetite and spirits. I shall go up to take care of them in ten or fifteen days.

I desire your father to bring or send a barrel of rough rice (rice unpounded). The young Scotchman of whom I spoke to him has already invented a machine which I think will clean ten times as much as your pounding machine with the same power; that is, ten times as fast. Send the rice that we may try.

On the 5th of July, 1802, Colonel Burr wrote to his adopted daughter Nathalie:

Your letter of the 22d of February, announcing your intended marriage, is this moment received. Nothing could be more grateful to me than the proposed connexion with Mr. Sumter. I know little of him personally, but his reputation and standing in society fully

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justify your choice, and I pray you to assure him that I shall most cordially take him to my bosom as a son. With his father I have been long acquainted, and always greatly respected him. We were fellow-soldiers during our Revolutionary War, in which he acted a most distinguished part, though we were not then known to each other. We served together some years in Congress, and labored in the same party. These circumstances never fail to generate attachments, and I am truly happy in being more closely allied to him. . . .

I perceive, and with pleasure, that I shall pass much of my time in South Carolina, and shall divide it between you and Theodosia; but the mountains are my favorite residence. Which is my favorite daughter, I have not yet been able to decide. We must not, however, abandon New York. I will have you both here, if possible, every year, and at Richmond Hill you shall renew the recollection of the happy hours of your childhood. . . .

I arrived here on the 23rd, with Theodosia, her boy — a most lovely boy — and her sister, Lady Nesbitt, who salutes you as a sister and longs to embrace you. We had a most charming passage of seven days.

P. S. I have not received a line from your mamma in some years. I am not at all surprised at her repugnance to your marriage with a democrat, the son of a rebel. She must hate, above all things, democrats and rebels. But tell her, as doubtless you have told her a thousand times, that she is wrong; and that we are not like your French democrats.

By September Theodosia had returned to New York, and she wrote to her husband on the 3d of that month:

What a pity minds could not be made sensible of each other's approach! Why were we not so formed that when your thoughts, your soul, were with your Theo, hers could be enabled, by the finest sensation of sympathy, to meet it? How superior to writing that would be! . . . I have been all this evening divining your occupation. Sometimes I imagine you writing or reading, and then the hope that you are thinking of me arises. Pray, what have you been doing? If you can possibly recollect, let me know. After all, it is more than probable that you have been smoking with Huger, entirely absorbed in your society and segar.

How does your election advance? I am anxious to know something of it; not from patriotism, however. It little concerns me which party succeeds. Where you are, there is my country, and in you are centered all my wishes. Were you a Brutus, I should be a Roman. But were you a Cæsar, I should only wish glory to Rome that glory might be yours. As long as you love me, I am nothing on earth but your wife and your friend, contented and proud to be that.

Mr. McPherson is much better. He sits up — I mean out of bed, a great part of the day. He has grown sentimental. He caught a moscheto (mosquito) the other day and kept it under a tumbler to meditate on, because it reminded him of Carolina, and consequently of Miss ———. What man under heaven ever before discovered an analogy between a moscheto and his mistress? I am very happy that you have chosen chess for your amusement. It keeps you constantly in mind how poor kings fare without their queens. Our little one has been very amiable to-day.

On the 8th of August, Colonel Burr wrote to his daughter from New York.

With extreme reluctance, *madame*, I am constrained to resign to Dr. Brown the honor of escorting you hither. The circumstances which have led to this measure are briefly noted in a letter which I have this day written you by the mail.

By Tuesday, the 9th inst., I shall be settled at Richmond Hill, ready to receive you and your incumbrances. Tell Mr. and Mrs. Alston that I hope there to have the pleasure of accommodating them more to their satisfaction than was in my power in the little mansion in Broadway. . . .

I recommend to you to go around by Stockbridge to see Binney. You will also see there your great-uncle Edwards. But this is left to your discretion. . . . We are all in the bustle of moving. Heighho! for Richmond Hill. What a pity you were not here, you do so love a bustle; and then you and the brat and the maid would add so charmingly to the confusion.

A month later Colonel Burr wrote to Colonel Alston:

The debility and loss of appetite which your wife has experienced, alarmed me; yet I was totally ignorant of the cause. . . . It is most unfortunate that she left the Springs. While she was there, either by

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means of the air or water, or perhaps both, she had got quite rid of the complaint, and there is no doubt but that, had she remained there a fortnight longer, the cure would have been radical. . . . There is nothing in this disorder which immediately threatens life; nor is it, at present, attended with pain; but if it should become fixed upon her, of which there is danger unless speedily cured, it will unfit her for every duty and every enjoyment in life.

On the 30th of September, Theodosia wrote to her husband from New York:

Another mail has arrived, but to your Theo it has brought only unhappiness. It is now a week since I received your last letter. You are ill. You have been imprudent and all my fears are fulfilled. Without anyone near to feel for you, to attend you, to watch every change, and share every pain. Your wife only could do that. It is her whose soul clings to yours and vibrates but in harmony with it; whose happiness, whose every emotion, more than entirely dependent on yours, are exchanged for them. . . . I know you have friends with you; but when you lose your vivacity, and your society is robbed of its usual charms, they will find your chamber dull, and leave it for some more amusing place. They cannot, like your little Theo, hang over you in your sleep, and, with a beating heart, listen to every groan and tremble at every noise. Your son, too, were we with you, would charm away your cares. His smiles could not fail to sooth any pain. They possess a magic which you cannot perceive till you see him. Would we were with you, my beloved. I am miserable without you.

Just a month later, on October 30, she wrote to him again:

I have now abandoned all hope of recovery. I do not say it in a moment of depression, but with all my reason about me. I am endeavoring to resign myself with cheerfulness; and you also, my husband, must summon up your fortitude to bear with a sick wife the rest of her life. At present my general health is very good; indeed, my appearance so perfectly announces it, that physicians smile at the idea of my being an invalid. The great misfortune of this complaint is that one may vegetate forty years in a sort of middle state between life and death, without the enjoyment of one or the rest of the other.



You will now see your boy within a few days and you will really be very much pleased with him. He is a sweet little rascal. If Heaven grant him but to live, I shall never repent what he has cost me.

Two weeks previous, or on the 15th of October, Colonel Burr wrote to his son-in-law:

In my letter of yesterday I said nothing of your son. He is well, and growing as you could wish. If I can see without prejudice, there never was a finer boy.

Of yourself, I have a good deal to say; more than I can find time to write and some things which cannot be written. . . . From your companions I presume little is to be gained save the pastime of a social hour. Yet time goes on and you have much to do. . . . I was quite shocked with your wan appearance when I first met you last spring. How different from that the fall preceding. With every advantage attainable in your climate, you have scarcely been free from fever during the season. This cannot fail to debilitate both mind and body. . . . The mountains, a more Northern latitude, or the grave must be your refuge. . . . *Here* you may freeze out all your "miasmata" and surplus bile in ten days, and go to Columbia with nerves well strung and blood well purified.

Colonel Burr wrote to his son-in-law again on the 5th of November:

The cold weather of the last ten days has had a happy effect on Theodosia. She is so far restored that I can with confidence assure you that she will return in health. The boy, too, grows fat and rosy with the frost. . . . When you shall see her and son, you will not regret the five months' separation.

Theodosia and her boy reached home safely, and her father wrote her on the 4th of December:

So you arrived on the 24th, after a passage of ten days; you and the Charleston packet on the same day. All this I learned last night; but not from you. Vanderlyn and I drank a bottle of champagne on the occasion. . . .

Vanderlyn has finished your picture in the most beautiful style



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imaginable. When it was done, he exclaimed with enthusiasm: "There is the best work I have ever done in America."

Your letter must be addressed to Washington. The dear little boy, I hope, made a good sailor.

Burr wrote to his daughter again on the 16th of December:

Your letter of the 26th came yesterday, that of the 25th the day preceding. . . . Had it not been for the intelligence by water of your safe arrival, we should have concluded that you and Kate (her cousin, Catharine Brown, daughter of Dr. Joseph Brown) were now dancing with Amphitrite. How jealous her majesty would have been at the presence of two such rivals. . . .

Vanderlyn projects to visit Charleston, but I am sure he will not. He is run down with applications for portraits, all of which, without discrimination, he refuses. He is greatly occupied in finishing his Niagara views, which, indeed, will do him honor. They will be four in number, and he thinks of having them engraved in France. You hear the roaring of the cataract when you look at them. Kiss the dear little boy.

Theodosia wrote from Clifton on the 17th of March, 1803:

I have been quite ill; till within two or three days totally unable to write. The whole family, as well as myself, had begun to think pretty seriously of my last journey; but, fortunately, I have had the pleasure of keeping them up a few nights, and drawing forth all their sensibility, without giving them the trouble of burying, mourning, etc. . . . My husband is well, and the boy charming.

Colonel Burr wrote from Philadelphia, on the 3d of June:

You are the most spiritless young person I ever knew. Pray muster up energy enough to do something more than lounge on sofas. Go on Sunday to Ludlow's. Ask some of your friends often to dine with you.

There is a little boy right opposite my window who has something of the way of "mammy's treasure." Don't be jealous; not half so handsome. I have had him over to my room, and have already taught him to *bang*.

On the 16th of June, 1803, Colonel Burr wrote to his daughter from Philadelphia. At that time Theodosia was in New York. She had written her father: "You must be home for my birthday (the 20th inst.) or I'll never forgive you; or rather, I shall not spend it pleasantly." Colonel Burr in his reply said: "The birthday must be kept. It shall be 'honoured with my presence.' You will therefore make your preparations and, among other articles for your feast or party, I recommend two fiddlers, not barbecued or roasted, but true to life."

A month later Theodosia was at Ballston Spa, and wrote to Colonel Burr:

Behold us, father, dear, at this fountain of health; and now my only wish is to leave it as soon as possible. . . . We have been very fortunate in getting a house entirely to ourselves, and one quite as pleasantly situated as that you mentioned. Mr. Walton has been extremely polite to us. We dined there on Monday and in the evening went to a ball, which surpassed my expectations in brilliancy. I danced twice, but I am unable to tell you whether I looked well or danced well; for you are the only person in the world who says anything to me about my appearance. My husband generally looks well pleased, but rarely makes remarks. . . .

The boy is pretty well, but I confess I have many doubts as to the healthiness of this place for children. Every morning since our arrival there has been a thick mist, which the sun does not disperse till nine or ten o'clock. I kiss you with all my heart.

The yellow fever was in New York in August: 1803. Burr wrote to Theodosia on the 8th inst.

Your amiable letter of the 1st inst. has not yet come to hand, and

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therefore cannot yet be acknowledged; perhaps it has not yet been written.

Indeed, we are about to be scourged with a plague called yellow fever. John Bard dead; but to keep the account good, Billy B. has twins (boys). Catharine Church Cruger (Mrs. Peter C.) has a son. But of the deaths. We die reasonably fast. Six or eight new cases reported yesterday. Of those who take the fever, three-fourths die. The coffee-house was, nevertheless, pretty well attended. No appearances of alarm until to-day. Several families have removed from the neighborhood of the Tontine Coffee-house, and five times the number will remove to-morrow.

Theodosia wrote from Washington on the 16th of October:

We arrived here yesterday somewhat fatigued. I was, however, very happy to find myself at Washington, for we had, in the morning, been near taking quite a different route. Some part of our harness having broken on the top of a pretty long descent, fortunately the leaders were frightened by the wheel horses crowding on them; and, running aside, one got his leg over the pole and was stopped, or you would not have had the pleasure of receiving this interesting scribleriad, and the poor world would have been deprived of the heir-apparent to all its admiration and glory. . . . I bear travelling remarkably well. Headaches have disappeared and my appetite increases; but poor little *Gampy* (her son's nickname; a perversion of "grandpa") does not like the confinement of the carriage.

Theodosia did not bear traveling so well five days later, when she wrote from Petersburg:

We reached here last night without any accident or even incident, but with great fatigue. Mr. Alston appears so distressed and worn out with the child's fretting, that it returns on me with redoubled force. . . . I confess I feel myself growing quite cross on the journey, and it is really to be feared that unless we finish soon the serene tranquillity of my placid temper may be injured. . . .

The boy has perfectly recovered. He remembers you astonishingly. He is constantly repeating that you are gone and calling after

you. When I told him to call Mr. Alston grandfather, "Grandfather gone," says he.

A week later, on October 29, Theodosia had reached Lumberton, South Carolina.

Thank Heaven, my dear father, I am at Lumberton, and within a few days of rest. I am sick, fatigued, out of patience and on the very brink of being out of temper. Judge, therefore, if I am not in great need of repose. What conduces to render the journey unpleasant is that it frets the boy, who has acquired two jaw teeth since he left you and still talks of *Gampy*.

On November 7, Colonel Burr wrote from New York:

All is sold, and well sold; not all, however. The house, outhouses, and some three or four acres remain. Enough to keep up the appearance, and all the pleasant recollections of your infantine days, and some of your matronly days also, are reserved with interest. This weighty business, however, is completed, and a huge weight is taken from the head and shoulders, and every other part, animal and intellectual, of A. B. . . .

If little Gamp could read, I should write to him volumes. I find my thoughts straying to him every hour in the day, and think more of him twenty fold than of you two together.

Another letter to Theodosia, from Washington, December 4, reads:

The manner of your letters pleases me "prodigiously." There is ease, good sense, and sprightliness. That from Petersburg merits still higher encomium. Tell dear little Gampy that I have read over his letters a great many times, and with great admiration. Mrs. Law, to whom I showed it, thinks it a production of genius. . . .

Pray take immediately in hand some book that requires attention and study. You will, I fear, lose the habit of study, which would be a greater misfortune than to lose your head.

Theodosia was happy when she wrote from Clifton on December 1, 1803:

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My health is infinitely improved, and I attribute it to nothing but the continual bustle I have been in for three weeks past. What a charming thing a bustle is. Oh, dear, delightful confusion. It gives a circulation to the blood, an activity to the mind, and a spring to the spirits.

On the 27th of December, 1803, Colonel Burr wrote to his daughter from Washington:

Your letter written on your return from seeing Nathalie, is received. You are a dear good little girl to write me so; and of dear little Gampy, too, so much, yet never enough. God bless thee.

On the 10th of December, 1803, Theodosia wrote to her father from Clifton:

I found Nathalie delighted to see me, and still pretty. She has grown thinner; much thinner, but her complexion is still good, though more languid. The loss of her hair is, however, an alteration for the worse. Her crop is pretty, but not half so much so as her fine brown hair. I write you all these foolish little particulars, because you enter into them all; or, rather, are sensible of all their importance to us. Nathalie has a lovely little daughter called after her. . . .

Men are indubitably born monkeys. Gampy imitates me in everything I do, and to-day I had a lesson not to be forgotten. He was playing in my room while I was dressing; quite at the commencement of my toilet, in fact, *en désabille*, I ran out in the entry to call my maid; while engaged in that operation I turned round and saw my brother's door opening within a few yards of me; girllike, or rather babylike, I ran to my room, threw the door openly violently, and uttering a scream, was at the other end of it in one jump. The boy, who was busily engaged in eating mint drops, no sooner heard me scream and appear frightened, than he yelled most loudly, and, running to me, caught my clothes, clenched his fists, and appeared really alarmed for two minutes. It was not affectation. Do you think this trait oninous of a coward? You know my abhorrence and contempt for those animals. Really, I have been uneasy ever since it happened. You see, I follow your injunction to the letter. How do you like this essay? Have you had enough of Gampy now?

On January 4, 1804, Colonel Burr wrote to his

daughter from Washington: "This is only to assure you that I am in perfect health; that General Jackson is my good friend; that I have had no duel nor quarrel with anybody, and have not been wounded or hurt."

The next day he wrote: "How could I forget to tell you the very important event of the marriage of Jerome Bonaparte to Miss Patterson? It took place on Saturday, the 24th ult. Mrs. Caton approves of this match, and therefore A. B. does, for he greatly respects the opinions of Mrs. Caton."

Colonel Burr's grandson was evidently constantly in his mind. On January 17, 1804, he wrote from Washington:

Of the boy you never say enough. Nothing about his French in your last. I hope you talk to him much in French, and Elconore always. . . .

Madame Bonaparte passed a week here. She is a charming little woman; just the size and nearly the figure of Theodosia Burr Alston; by some thought a little like her; perhaps not so well in the shoulders; dresses with taste and simplicity (by some thought too free); has sense, and spirit, and sprightliness. . . .

I want a French translation of the Constitution of the United States, and, for the purpose, send you a copy in English. It will, I fear, be a great labor to you; but I cannot get it done here, and it may not be useless to you to burnish up your French a little. . . .

You do not say whether the boy knows his letters. I am sure he may now be taught them, and then put a pen into his hand and set him to imitate them. He may read and write before he is three years old. This, with speaking French, would make him a tolerably accomplished lad of that age, and worthy of his blood.

Burr was undoubtedly interested in Washington Irving. On January 29 he wrote from Washington to Theodosia:

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There is no end to the trouble such a baggage gives me. Another thing occurs which, forsooth, must be sent to her too. It would not, perhaps, merit so high an honor as that of being perused by your . . . eyes and touched by your fair hands, but that it is the production of a youth (Washington Irving), of about nineteen, the youngest brother of Dr. Peter Irving, of New York.

Colonel Burr was wrong in stating the age of Washington Irving, who really was fourteen months older than Theodosia.

On April 3, 1804, Colonel Burr wrote from New York to Theodosia:

I hasten to acknowledge your long, interesting, and beautiful letter of the 14th. It is received this morning, and finds me in the midst of occupations connected with the approaching election. Of course, every minute, interruptions. . . . You improve greatly in your style and manner of writing. A little more pains and a little more reading, and you will exceed Lady Mary W. Montague. Practice, however, is indispensable. The art of writing is an acquirement, as much as music or dancing. . . . As you have a great taste for mischief, I send you a new paper (The Corrector, by Toby Tickler) established in this city, by whom edited unknown. Some of the numbers are allowed to have wit. Whether these have any I know not. God bless thee.

On April 25, 1804, he invited Theodosia and her husband to come to New York.

You take Richmond Hill; bring no horse nor carriage. I have got a nice, new, beautiful little chariot, very light, on an entirely new construction, invented by the Vice-president. Now, these two machines are severally adapted to two horses, and you may take your choice of them. Of horses, I have five; three always and wholly at your devotion, and the whole five occasionally. Harry and Sam are both good coachmen, either at your orders. Of servants, there are enough for family purposes. Eleonore, however, must attend you, for the sake of the heir apparent. You will want no others, as there are at my house Peggy, Nancy, and a girl of about eleven. Mr. Alston may bring a footman. Anything further will be useless; he may, however, bring



six or eight of them if he like. The cellars and garrets are well stocked with wine, having had a great supply last fall. I shall take rooms (a house, etc.) in town, but will live with you as much or as little as you may please and as we can agree; but my establishment at Richmond Hill must remain, whether you come or not.

In his letter of May 1 he referred again to his grandson: "Of the boy you have been remarkably reserved in your last two letters. I conclude, however, that he cannot be dead, as you would, probably, have thought that circumstance worthy of being mentioned; at least in a postscript. Now, Nathalie has written me a whole page about her girl, for which I am very grateful."

Still more about his grandson in his letter of June 11:

The letter of A. B. A. at the foot of yours, was far the most interesting. I have studied every pothook and trammel of his first literary performance to see what rays of genius could be discovered. You remember our friend Schweitzer, nephew and pupil of Lavater. He used to insist that as much was to be inferred from the handwriting as from the face. I showed him a letter from a man of great fame and he saw genius in every stroke. I then produced a letter from an arrant blockhead and great knave, but so like the other as not to be distinguished, at least by my unphysiognomical discernment. He acknowledged that there was a resemblance to an ignorant eye, but, said he, triumphantly, this (latter) could never have made that scratch, which sybilistic scratch was the mere prolongation of the last letter of the last word in a sentence. Now it occurs to me that one of A. B. A.'s scratches is exactly in the line of genius, according to Schweitzer; and surely more may be presumed from the instinctive effort of untutored infancy than from the labored essay of scientific cultivation. To aid your observation in this line, I pray you to read *Martinus Scriblerius*.

A still further reference to his grandson occurs in Colonel Burr's letter of June 24:

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I do not like the boy looking pale so early in the season. It argues ill; but I like much his heroism and gallantry. You cannot think how much these little details amuse and interest me. If you were quite mistress of natural philosophy, he would now be acquiring a knowledge of various branches, particularly natural history, botany and chymistry. Pursue these studies and also that of language. For fifty dollars you may get, in Philadelphia, a chymical apparatus, put up in a small box, with which more than one hundred experiments may be tried.

On the 1st of July, 1804, Colonel Burr wrote to his daughter:

Having been shivering with cold all day, though in perfect health, I have now, just at sunset, had a fire in my library, and am sitting near it and enjoying it, if that word be applicable to anything done in solitude. Some very wise man, however, has exclaimed,

“Oh, fools, who think it solitude to be alone.”

With this letter closed the correspondence between father and daughter, which had continued through three years of her married life. As Burr sat in his library that day alone, he may have had a premonition of the future. Ex-Governor George Clinton had been elected to succeed him as Vice-president. He had failed to secure an election as Governor of New York, and his political warfare was over, for a time at least. On the 17th of the preceding month, he had written to Judge Van Ness, requesting him to call upon him the following morning, on the 18th. The first letter to Hamilton had been written two days later. On the 3d of July Mr. Van Ness paid another visit to Mr. Pendleton; and after a few subsequent interviews, the time when the parties were to meet was ultimately fixed upon for the

morning of the 11th of July. It is sure, then, that when Burr sat in his library "shivering with cold" on the first day of July, that he was aware of the impending meeting. But he said nothing of it in his letter to his daughter. Within a fortnight from the date of that letter, Theodosia was to meet with the first great affliction of her young life.

## CHAPTER XII

### HER GREAT AFFLICTIONS

**T**HREE years of happy, wedded life to be followed by three times that of sorrow, grief, almost despair, and, finally, death in a strange manner among strangers. If the hand of Fate could have warned her to leave the South and stay with her father, what a parting of the ways there would have been. One road led to happiness and long life. Her husband would have followed her, for he loved her more than wealth or fame. The road she took — we all know how devious was the way and how dark the night that closed in upon those she loved, and, at last, upon herself.

Within eight years there came to her five great afflictions. One such would have unnerved an ordinary woman, but her teacher had made her a combination of velvet and steel. This deft interlacing of womanly sweetness of heart with manly hardihood of soul carried her through all her trials -- to the supreme one; how she bore that, no mortal voice has ever told, but we are sure it must have been with the faith of a Christian and the bravery of a Spartan.

Let us then accompany her through her five vales of trouble — a journey pitiful and sorrowful, but enlivened by such displays of wifely affection,

motherly tenderness, and filial love, that the story becomes almost entrancing from the human sympathy that it evokes in the reader. Many pens have written the story of her self-abnegation. With these as a guide and inspiration, the hand that writes it again must not falter nor fail.

Her father's duel with Hamilton, followed so quickly by his political and social ostracism; her own physical condition which led her to write the pathetic letter of farewell to her husband and son; her father's arrest for treason, and the nerve and soul tension of the trial at Richmond; her father's exile in Europe, beyond the reach of her love or assistance; and the early death of her cherished boy, were the great afflictions of her young life.

Theodosia was proud, and, like her father, not inclined to show the white feather to either friends or enemies. Husband and father, however, were within a charmed circle, and to them her heart could speak. What she said to her husband no one knows, but in her letters to her father are found suspense, anxiety, fear, sometimes almost despair, to which he returned strenuous commands to preserve her self-possession and not betray her inward feelings to the world.

It seems almost incomprehensible that Burr could sit in his library when he knew that the meeting with Hamilton was imminent, and yet write his daughter a commonplace letter about some books being wrongly shipped from London, adding thereto a few bits of New York gossip about ladies of prominence or fashion who were, presumably, known to Theodosia. And yet, a father's love may

have prompted this reticence. He knew her disposition, and to tell her that he was to imperil his life, and then doom her to three weeks' suspense before she could know the outcome of the affair, was an unnecessary cruelty. So his letter, written the evening before the duel, was a farewell to her, and to earth. He had not credited his coming antagonist with so much generosity and magnanimity as to suppose that he would offer himself as a target and forfeit his rights as a principal. Burr had every reason to think that his life was in danger, but he broke the news to his daughter as calmly as though he contemplated a trip to her Southern home.

In his letter to his daughter he did not mention the duel. In that to his son-in-law at the close he said simply; "I have called out General Hamilton and we meet to-morrow morning. Van Ness will give you the particulars. The preceding has been written in contemplation of this event. If it shall be my lot to fall, yet I shall live in you and your son. I commit to you all that is most dear to me — my reputation and my daughter. Your talents and your attachment will be the guardian of the one — your kindness and your generosity of the other."

Who can see in this, bravado, or a revengeful spirit? If he had felt it, would not he, his last night on earth, perhaps, have expressed it to one so near and dear to him? Smarting with his wrongs, would he not, for once, have attempted self-justification? He wrote like a gentleman — no hint of premeditated murder — no threat of

assassination — in a meeting conducted according to the *code duello* in force at the time. The duel took place on July 11, 1804.

Parton (81) thus refers to Theodosia's state of mind after the duel: "The next news Theodosia received from her father was that he was a fugitive from the sudden abhorrence of his fellow-citizens; that an indictment for murder was hanging over his head; that his career in New York was, in all probability, over forever; and that he was destined to be, for a time, a wanderer on the earth. *Her happy days were at an end.* She never blamed her father for this, or for any act of his; on the contrary, she accepted, without questioning, his own version of the facts, and his own view of the morality of what he had done. He had formed her mind and tutored her conscience. He *was* her conscience. But though she censured him not, her days and nights were embittered by anxiety from this time to the last day of her life."

While we must agree with Parton as to the anxiety caused by her father's misfortunes, letters already quoted from, or to be used in part, show that Theodosia had a conscience of her own. It was not her conscience that approved; it was her love that condoned, and ever hoped for the best. Theodosia was a *creation*, not a *replica* of her father. If she had married Washington Irving or some Northern man, and had made her home with, or near, her father, her influence and her love, combined with his intense regard for her, would have prevented the duel with Hamilton and its subsequent mistakes and misfortunes. To doubt this would

remove the confidence felt by many a woman who has read her story that *she*, by her love, may reclaim a husband or father whose path is devious.

On August 3 Burr wrote from Philadelphia to Colonel Alston, but for his daughter's eye: "Have no anxiety about the issue of this business." To Theodosia the day preceding: "Don't let me have the idea that you are dissatisfied with me a moment. I can't just now endure it. At another time you may play the Juno if you please." To Theodosia on August 3: "You will find the papers filled with all manner of nonsense and lies. Among other things, accounts of attempts to assassinate me. These, I assure you, are mere fables. Those who wish me dead prefer to keep at a very respectful distance."

On September 15 he wrote from St. Simon's: "It will compel me to abandon the hope of seeing you until the last of February. On this, *as on all other occasions*, let me find that you exhibit the firmness which I have been proud to ascribe to you."

In October, 1804, Burr met his daughter and son-in-law. By the 23d he had reached Fayetteville on his way to Washington to preside over the Senate in December.

On October 31 he wrote Theodosia: "How faithfully I return you the paper which you *lent* me at Statesburgh. This is the last sheet, and I think you will have received back all but one of them."

Despite the brightness, almost levity, of Burr's letters at this time, it is evident that his daughter was not wholly convinced, or he would not have





## THEODOSIA

written her: "You treat with too much gravity the New Jersey affair (an indictment for murder). It should be considered as a farce, and you will yet see it terminated so as to leave only ridicule and contempt to its abettors."

Theodosia was still uneasy in her mind as regarded her father's safety from prosecution. On March 10, 1805, he wrote, from Washington, the session of Congress having closed: "Your anxieties about me evince a sort of sickly sensibility which indicates that you are not well. I fear that you are suffering a debility, arising from climate or other cause, which affects both mind and body. When you are in health you have no sort of solicitude or apprehension about me; you confide that, under any circumstances, I am able to fulfil your expectations and your wishes. Resume, I pray you, this confidence, so flattering to me, so consoling to yourself, may I add, so justly founded."

No doubt his daughter's ill-health was the result of her anxiety and her fears for her father's safety. Still in Philadelphia, he wrote, on April 10: "I rejoice that your nerves are in better tone, for truly, in some of your letters, I could scarcely recognize my daughter."

On April 30, Burr was at Pittsburgh, making ready for his Western and Southern trip. He thus described his boat or "ark": "My boat is, properly speaking, a floating house, sixty feet by fourteen, containing dining-room, kitchen with fireplace, and two bedrooms, roofed from stern to stern; steps to go up and a walk on the top the whole length; glass windows, etc. This edifice cost

me one hundred and thirty-three dollars, and how it can be made for that sum passes my comprehension."

His trip took six months, during which time he visited Wheeling (now in West Virginia), Marietta and Cincinnati (Ohio), Lexington (Kentucky), Nashville (Tennessee), Natchez (Mississippi), and New Orleans (Louisiana). On his return trip he again visited Nashville and remained a week with General Jackson. Thence to Louisiana and St. Louis; then east again to Berkeley Springs, which he reached on October 20, where he expected to meet his daughter and her husband.

How was it with Theodosia during this long absence? Her health was poor, for in a letter written to Colonel Alston from Washington, on November 29, Burr says: "My solicitude about the health of Theodosia is no way relieved by the sort of recovery of which she advises me. The boy, too, has a relapse of the ague, a disease of all others the most fatal to the infant constitution. Great God! What sacrifices do you make, and to what end? These solitudes poison all my enjoyments, and often unfit me for business. Being apprized . . . of the engagements and ties which will prevent you, at least for some months, from leaving South Carolina, I determine, at any sacrifice, to rescue Theodosia and (her) son."

The world would never have known Theodosia's enfeebled condition while her father was on his travels, had not, several years after her disappearance, a trunk been found in her house in South Carolina, which contained a letter addressed as

follows: "To my husband. To be delivered after my death, and before my burial."

August 6, 1805.

Whether it is the effect of extreme debility and disordered nerves, or whether it is really presentiment, the existence of which I have been often told of, and always doubted, I cannot tell; but something whispers me that my end approaches. In vain I reason with myself; in vain I occupy my mind, and seek to fix my attention on other subjects; there is about me that dreadful heaviness and sinking of the heart, that awful foreboding, of which it is impossible to divest myself. Perhaps I am now standing on the brink of eternity; and ere I plunge in the fearful abyss, I have some few requests to make.

I wish your sisters (one of them, it is immaterial which) would select from my clothes certain things which, they will easily perceive, belonged to my mother. These, with whatever lace they find in a large trunk in a garret-room of the Oaks house, added to a little satin-wood box (the largest, and having a lock and key), and a black satin embroidered box, with a pin-cushion; all these things I wish they would put together in one trunk, and send them to Frederick with the enclosed letter. I prefer him, for Bartow's wife would have little respect for what, however trifling it may appear, I nevertheless deem sacred.

I beg Sister Maria will accept of my watch-ring. She will find a locket which she gave me, containing the hair of her mother; she had better take it. If the lace in my wardrobe at the Oaks be of any use to Charlotte, I beg she will take it, or anything else she wishes. My heart is with those dear amiable sisters, to give them something worth preserving in recollection of me; but they know that a warm friendship is all I have to give.

Return to mamma the eagle she gave me. Should an opportunity to Catharine Brown ever occur, send her a pearl necklace, a small diamond ring, a little pair of coral tablets, which are among my trinkets at the Oaks. I pray you, my dear husband, send Bartow's daughter some present for me, and to himself and Frederick a lock of my hair. Return Nathalie the little desk she gave me, accompanied by assurances of my affectionate recollection, and a ring of my hair. Remember me to Sally, who is truly amiable, and whom I sincerely esteem.

I beg also you will write immediately to New York, forwarding some money for the comfortable support of *Peggy* until my father can pro-

vide for her. Do not permit grief at the loss of me to render you forgetful of this, for the poor creature may expire of want in the meantime. I beg this may be attended to without delay.

To you, my beloved, I leave our child; the child of my bosom, who was once a part of myself, and from whom I shall shortly be separated by the cold grave. You love him now; henceforth love him for me also. And oh, my husband, attend to this last prayer of a dotting mother. Never, never listen to what any other person tells you of him. Be yourself his judge on all occasions. He has faults; see them, and correct them yourself. Desist not an instant from your endeavors to secure his confidence. It is a work which requires as much uniformity of conduct as warmth of affection towards him. I know, my beloved, that you can perceive what is right on this subject as on every other. But recollect, these are the last words I can ever utter. It will tranquillize my last moments to have disburdened myself of them.

I fear you will scarcely be able to read this scrawl, but I feel hurried and agitated. Death is not welcome to me. I confess it is ever dreaded. You have made me too fond of life. Adieu, then, thou kind, thou tender husband. Adieu, friend of my heart. May heaven prosper you, and may we meet hereafter. Adieu; perhaps we may never see each other again in this world. You are away; I wished to hold you fast and prevent you from going this morning. But He who is wisdom itself ordains events; we must submit to them. Least of all should I murmur. I, on whom so many blessings have been showered — whose days have been numbered by bounties — who have had such a husband, such a child, such a father. Oh, pardon me, my God, if I regret leaving these. I resign myself. Adieu, once more, and for the last time, my beloved. Speak of me often to our son. Let him love the memory of his mother, and let him know how he was loved by her. Your wife, your fond wife,

THEO.

Let my father see my son sometimes. Do not be unkind towards him whom I have loved so much, I beseech you. Burn all my papers except my father's letters, which I beg you to return to him. Adieu, my sweet boy. Love your father; be grateful and affectionate to him while he lives, be the pride of his meridian, the support of his departing days. Be all that he wishes; for he made your mother happy. Oh! my heavenly Father, bless them both. If it is permitted, I will

hover round you, and guard you, and intercede for you. I hope for happiness in the next world, for I have not been bad in this.

I had nearly forgotten to say that I charge you not to allow me to be stripped and washed, as is usual. I am pure enough thus to return to dust. Why, then, expose my person? Pray, see to this. If it does not appear contradictory or silly, I beg to be kept as long as possible before I am consigned to the earth.

From January, 1806, until August in the same year, Colonel Burr passed his time principally in Washington and Philadelphia. In August he began his second Western tour, again visited Blennerhassett Island, went down the Mississippi, and on the 3d of March, 1807, was arrested by order of President Jefferson for treason, and taken to Richmond, Virginia, for trial. We now reach the third of Theodosia's great afflictions.

Burr's first letter to his daughter after his arrest was dated Richmond, March 27, 1807.

My military escort having arrived at Fredericksburgh, on our way to Washington, there met a special messenger with orders to convey me to this place. Hither we came forthwith and arrived last evening. It seems that here the business is to be tried and concluded. I am to be surrendered to the civil authority to-morrow, when the question of bail will be determined. In the meantime, I remain at the Eagle tavern.

On April 26, a month later, he wrote her: "Your letters of the 10th and those preceding seemed to indicate a sort of stupor; but now you will rise into phrensy. Another ten days will, it is hoped, have brought you back to reason." He added, referring, doubtless, to one of her previous letters: "It ought not, however, to be forgotten that the (your) letter of the 15th was written under a paroxysm of the toothache."

It is not intended here to consider in any way the trial of Colonel Burr at Richmond. That consideration is reserved for another volume; in fact, will require a volume of itself. The presentation of Theodosia's connection with the trial is, however, needed here, and portions of available material that relate to her will be given briefly.

Theodosia did not reach Richmond until the end of July. On June 24 her father wrote: "I beg and expect it of you that you will conduct yourself as becomes my daughter, and that you manifest no signs of weakness or alarm."

June 30, 1807.

Of myself you could expect to hear nothing new; yet something new and unexpected was moved yesterday. The counsel for the prosecution proposed to the court that Aaron Burr should be sent to the penitentiary for safe keeping, and stated that the governor and council had offered to provide me with an apartment in the third story of that building. This is extremely kind and obliging in the governor and his council. The distance, however, would render it so inconvenient to my counsel to visit me, that I should prefer to remain where I am; yet the rooms proposed are said to be airy and healthy.

July 3, 1807.

I have three rooms in the third story of the penitentiary, making an extent of one hundred feet. My jailer is quite a polite and civil man — altogether unlike the idea one would form of a jailer. You would have laughed to have heard our compliments the first evening.

*Jailer:* I hope, sir, it would not be disagreeable to you if I should lock this door after dark.

*Burr:* By no means, sir; I should prefer it to keep out intruders.

*Jailer:* It is our custom, sir, to extinguish all lights at nine o'clock: I hope, sir, you will have no objection to conform to that.

*Burr:* That, sir, I am sorry to say, is impossible; for I never go to bed till twelve, and always burn two candles.

*Jailer:* Very well, sir; just as you please. I should have been glad if it had been otherwise; but as you please, sir.

While I have been writing, different servants have arrived with messages, notes, and inquiries, bringing oranges, lemons, pineapples, raspberries, apricots, cream, butter, ice, and some ordinary articles.

July 6, 1807.

My friends and acquaintances of both sexes are permitted to visit me without interruption, without inquiring their business, and without the *presence of a spy*. It is well that I have an ante-chamber, or I should often be *gêné* with visitors.

If you come, I can give you a bedroom and parlour on this floor. The bedroom has three large closets, and it is a much more commodious one than you ever had in your life. Remember, no agitations, no complaints, no fears or anxieties on the road, or I renounce thee.

July 24, 1807.

I want an independent and discerning witness to my conduct and to that of the government. The scenes which have passed, and those about to be transacted, will exceed all reasonable credibility, and will hereafter be deemed fables, unless attested by very high authority.

I repeat what has heretofore been written, that I should never invite anyone, much less those so dear to me, to witness my disgrace. I may be immured in dungeons, chained, murdered in legal form, but I cannot be humiliated or disgraced. If absent, you will suffer great solicitude. In my presence you will feel none, whatever may be the *malice* or the *power* of my enemies, and in both they abound.

July 30, 1807.

I am informed that some good-natured people here have provided you a house, and furnished it, a few steps from my town house. I had also made a temporary provision for you in my townhouse, whither I shall remove on Sunday; but I will not, if I can possibly avoid it, move before your arrival, having a great desire to receive you *all* in *this mansion*. Pray, therefore, drive directly out here. You may get admission at any time from four in the morning till ten at night. Write me by the mail from Petersburg, that I may know of your approach. (On this letter is endorsed, in Theodosia's handwriting, "Received on our approach to Richmond. How happy it made me!")

Parton (82) says: "A messenger bore the news of the acquittal to Theodosia. While her father was insisting upon his right to a more ample vindication at the hands of the jury, she was writing the intelligence to a dear friend, the wife of one of her mother's sons, in whose family archives it is still preserved." Parton adds that he was permitted to copy the part that follows, as it related to Colonel Burr.

I have this moment received a message from court announcing to me that the jury has brought in a verdict of acquittal, and I hasten to inform you of it, my dear, to allay the anxiety which, with even more than your usual sweetness, you have expressed in your letter of the 22d of July. It afflicts me, indeed, to think that you should have suffered so much from sympathy with the imagined state of my feelings — for the knowledge of my father's innocence, my ineffable contempt for his enemies, and the elevation of his mind, have kept me above any sensations bordering on depression. Indeed, my father, so far from accepting of sympathy, has continually animated all around him; it was common to see his desponding friends filled with alarm at some new occurrence, terrified with some new appearance of danger, fly to him in search of encouragement and support, and laughed out of their fears by the subject of them. This I have witnessed every day, and it almost persuaded me that he possessed the secret of repelling danger as well as apprehension. Since my residence here, of which some days and a night were passed in the penitentiary, our little family circle has been a scene of uninterrupted gayety. Thus you see, my lovely sister, this visit has been a real party of pleasure. From many of the first inhabitants I have received the most unremitting and delicate attentions, sympathy, indeed, of any I ever experienced.

Theodosia wrote in that state of elation which follows the removal of suspense — accompanied by a satisfied feeling of safety. Had the verdict been otherwise, all her fears and forebodings would have returned with even greater intensity. We are all brave when the danger is past.



Theodosia returned home. There was now no danger of the hangman or of imprisonment; but the social ostracism still remained. Davis (83) thus portrays the situation in the summer of 1808:

On the 7th of June, 1808, Colonel Burr sailed from New York on board the British packet for England, via Halifax. The personal and political prejudices which the influence of power and the death of Hamilton had excited against him, rendered, as he conceived, a temporary absence from this country desirable; and, at the same time, believing that the political situation of Europe offered opportunities for accomplishing the object he had long contemplated, of emancipating the Spanish American Colonies from the degrading tyranny of Spain, it was his design to solicit the aid of some European government in such an undertaking. With these views he embarked for England. During his residence in Europe he regularly corresponded with his daughter, Mrs. Alston, and also kept a private diary; but probably from the apprehension that his papers were at all times subject to the supervision of the government police, his memoranda are in a great measure restricted to occurrences private and personal.

In 1838 "The Private Journal of Aaron Burr, during his Residence of Four Years in Europe, with Selections from his Correspondence," edited by Matthew L. Davis, was published in two volumes, by Harper & Brothers, of New York.

Mr. Davis says in his preface:

It should also be borne in mind that the diary was intended only as a memorandum for conversation with his daughter on his return to America. He repeatedly mentions this in his notes. The idea of publication, certainly never occurred to him. . . . Why, then, it may be asked, is this Journal published? Because, unless the editor deceives himself, unambitious as it is, it will answer the reader; because it illustrates the character of a distinguished man, whose influence has been felt in his country's fortunes, and whose name will live in her history; and because the character illustrated is amiable, interesting, and not without instruction to the observer. This man of dark

intrigue and remorseless design, as it has pleased politicians and reviewers, clerical and lay, to represent him, is here shown in an artless autobiographic narrative, which *could not be feigned*, to have been one of the most amiable and playful of men; like the little children whom he so remarkably and characteristically loved, he was pleased with the slightest incidents, lively and happy in the humblest circumstances, and incapable of harbouring a lasting resentment.

In preparing the Journal for press, Mr. Davis omitted many pages, took great liberties with the text, and made many incorrect translations of foreign words which Burr used liberally. The original manuscript became the property of Mr. W. K. Bixby, of St. Louis, a noted patron of letters and an ardent bibliophile, and he decided to issue an *unexpurgated* edition, which was published in 1903, in two volumes. The title page reads: "The Private Journal of Aaron Burr, Reprinted in full from the Original Manuscript in the Library of W. K. Bixby, of St. Louis, Missouri, with an Introduction, Explanatory Notes, and a Glossary." The edition of 250 copies was printed at Rochester, New York, and the plates destroyed. The work was for private distribution only, no copies being sold. The copy in the possession of the writer, being a gift from Mr. Bixby, is Number 7. In the year 1906 a copy was sold at auction in New York and brought \$154.00. In the present year, (1907), a second copy was sold at auction in New York City for \$144.00. No reasons were given for these sales of a gift but presumably one or both formed part of the library of some person deceased.

Theodosia's fourth great affliction was her father's—in some degree voluntary but in other respects en-

forced — exile from his native land. The Davis edition has letters interpolated throughout, the greater part being between father and daughter, and it is from these, principally, that extracts will be made, in order to show Theodosia's physical and mental condition during her father's prolonged absence. Burr's last interview with his daughter was at the house of a Mrs. Pollock, on the evening of his embarkation. They never again met. "Went on board the pilot boat at 11 A.M., June 7, 1808; on the 8th, at 3 P.M., anchored between the Narrows and Sandy Hook; at 7 P.M., on June 9, set sail," are the entries in his Journal. Burr travelled *incognito* as "Mr. G. H. Edwards," and Theodosia was known as "Mary Ann Edwards."

Colonel Burr wrote many letters to his daughter before the vessel sailed, she being in New York, and he in the immediate vicinity, but with no clue given as to his exact location. This precaution was taken to avoid arrest.

His first thought was of his daughter's health: "The affliction of the nerves arises wholly from the disease, and can only be cured by removing those diseases. All nervous medicines, unless for momentary relief, are quackery and nonsense. The spring waters of Ballston or Saratoga are the best; the only tonic that performs at once the double cure."

To his *incognito* he added still further mystery: "My letters to you will be often in a strange handwriting, and with various signatures."

Theodosia bore up bravely: "There is dignity and fortitude in your letter. Need it be added that I am charmed with it?"

He continued his instructions in letter-writing: "Always have before you the letters you are about to answer, read them over before you begin, and make short notes of the heads requiring a reply."

There was a "scene" at parting: "The transition was fortunate, and the new location made under good auspices, but the moment of separation was embittered by tears and reproaches, to which, unfortunately, your page was a witness."

But this was not the last meeting: "It does not appear to me that we can conveniently meet this evening, but certainly one whole night before separation. Make haste, in the meantime, to gather strength for the occasion. Your efforts on the late one were wonderful. God grant that they may not have wholly exhausted you."

Theodosia wrote from Ballston, June 21, 1808: "This is the commencement of my 26th year. . . . We were alarmed with a report that you had been taken by the French, but it was immediately contradicted." To encourage her father, she wrote: "Never were hopes brighter than mine. To look on the gloomy side would be death to me, and without reserve I abandon myself to all the gay security of a sanguine temper." And then follows a heart touch: "Ah, if I had but you to nurse me! How good the tea was that you made. How tenderly were all my wishes anticipated, every inconvenience prevented." Then, thinking that her father might consider this as repining, she added: "But do not imagine that my spirits are low, so that I am so weak as to wish you back."

On July 26 Burr went by stage to Weybridge,

England, to see Mrs. Prevost, a relative of his wife.

On August 11 he received an invitation from Jeremy Bentham to pass several days with him. Burr took with him a portrait of his daughter, and it was his companion during his four years of exile. He showed it to Bentham, who remarked: "Dear little creature. Let her take care."

In a letter to Bentham (September 7, 1808), he wrote: "I engage to defend you *penna et pugnīs*, against Dumont's gods; and if, as is to be expected, I should take my flight before you, Theodosia shall do it for me (not *pugnīs*). How her little heart will swell with pride when she shall receive your message with the combustibles (Bentham's books). If some one of them could be addressed to her with your own hand, it would descend in the family like an heirloom."

In a letter to his daughter (September 8, 1808) he referred to a Mrs. Achaud, a niece of the late Colonel Prevost, and first cousin to Frederic (Augustine James Frederic Prevost) who was one of Theodosia's step-brothers.

That Theodosia was not always "cheerful," and did not always abandon herself "to all the gay security of a sanguine temper," is shown by her letter of September 30, 1808, written from Pelham, New York: "Not one word from you has reached me since those few lines from the first stage. I did not expect to have remained thus long in this painful suspense. There are a thousand vague reports about you. . . . I write without pleasure, and only, indeed, to satisfy my desire of seizing every oppor-

tunity to gratify you, even though I should have only one chance of success in a million. Except myself, all your friends are well. But the world begins to cool terribly around me. You would be surprised how many I supposed attached to me have abandoned the sorry, losing game of disinterested friendship. Frederic, alone, however, is worth a host."

Burr wrote from London (October 24, 1808): "The arrival of the packet has brought me your letter of the 3d September. It is a deadly blow to my hopes. Some great, some immediate and violent change must be made in your habits. A sea voyage and a climate wholly different would promise much."

He had consulted physicians about her complaint and they declared her case curable. He promised to send her their advice by the next packet. He then became humorous: "To fill up this blank page (I) take one of the many epigrams on Sir *Hew* Dalrymple. It was made impromptu by one of my friends in my presence.

When knights of old their falchions drew,  
*Their* mot de guerre was Hack and Hew;  
 One modern knight, of fighting shy,  
 Should make *his* motto Hew and Cry.

"The following ridiculous epitaph made me laugh. If it raise a smile on the wan cheek of my Theodosia, I should deem it valuable indeed. The subject of it, who is more famed for his wealth and his long services in the corporation than for classic education, is in the habit, as is said, like our worthy Vice-president, of using *this-ere* and *that-are*, as, Exigra: Take *this-here* knife and cut *that-there* goose. The epitaph was produced at a feast at which he was present,

and the story adds that he joined in the laugh with great good humour.

Here lies WILLIAM CURTIS, our late worthy lord-mayor,  
Who has left *this-here* world and gone to *that-there*."

Separated, as Theodosia was from her father, hearing from him only at long intervals, it is no wonder that she was in a constant state of anxiety as to his movements and his prospects. This is shown forcibly in a letter written by her from New York (October 31, 1808).

I presume that when you last wrote me, none of your plans could be matured; but as soon as you have formed any determinations, I conjure you to inform me of them as soon as possible. I know that entreaty is not necessary. I am too proud of your confidence to affect a doubt of it; but my mind is anxious, impatiently anxious in regard to your future destiny. Where you are going, what will occupy you, how this will terminate, employ me continually; and when, forgetful of myself, my brain is busy with a multitude of projects, my poor little heart cries out — and when shall we meet? You, or rather circumstances, have deprived me of my greatest support during your absence. . . . Oh, my guardian angel, why were you obliged to abandon me just when enfeebled nature doubly required your care? Alas, alas, how often have I deplored the want of your counsel and tenderness! How often, when my tongue and hands trembled with disease, have I besought Heaven either to reunite us or let me die at once! Yet do not hence imagine that I yield to infantine lamentations or impatience. As soon as relief from pain restored me in some measure to myself, I became more worthy the happiness of being your daughter.

When Burr left the United States, he placed in his daughter's hands certain notes or accounts from which he expected to receive a large sum of money. His daughter was unable to collect the money due, and therefore could not send it to him. Her health

was still poor, but that did not cause her so much concern as the fact that her father was in a foreign country without financial resources. She wrote to him from New York, January 3, 1809:

Nothing can exceed the anxiety your pecuniary concern has given me; but as yet the money has not been paid. I hope and believe it will be received at length; but it distresses me beyond measure that nothing can be remitted to you immediately. Your situation in a foreign country, without any pursuit, renders me doubly solicitous on the subject. The instant anything satisfactory is done, you shall profit by it without any loss of time, be assured; for my heart feels what you suffer more severely than its own afflictions. . . . Do not be unhappy about me. Irving (Dr. Peter Irving) will tell you that I am quite plump — ill as this seems to accord with my hysterics and the obstinacy of my complaint.

Theodosia had a surplusage of medical treatment. She not only took preparations prepared by "Dr. Hosack" and "Eustis," but her father had sent her prescriptions from England to be tried. She was of the opinion that what good health she did have came from a naturally good constitution rather than from the use of the medicines. She decided to try the Ballston waters again, and wrote from New York, February 1, 1809:

I have tried the Ballston waters to-day, notwithstanding the interdiction, and you will have some idea of the alteration in my habit when I tell you that one small tumbler and a half gave me a slow fever, pain in the back, burning, and every sensation of approaching relief. They were drank, too, at the interval of some hours. I *will* not take any more mercury. It renders abortive the advantages of climate, ruins my teeth, and will destroy my constitution. There is little doubt in my mind that perfect health will soon return.

Burr had written voluminously to his daughter concerning his acquaintanceship with Jeremy Ben-



tham, and the pleasant times he passed with him at his house in London. Burr told his daughter that Bentham liked cats. She replied:

I am sorry Jeremy Bentham likes cats. I hate them; but henceforth I shall treat them with infinite deference, and, whenever a cat crosses my path, make her my obeisance as one of the family of his chosen favourites. You must not talk to Mr. Bentham when writing in cipher. It causes you to make errors. You know I love to convict you of an error, as some philosophers seek for spots on the sun. . . . You inquire what you shall send Frederic. Would not some treatise upon agriculture and the dairy, or some seeds of the finest grapes and best wheat be at once pleasing and serviceable? He sometimes thinks seriously of becoming a cotton planter and residing with me at the mountains. I do not know what will be his determination.

Theodosia was in hopes that some money would be paid so that a remittance could be sent to her father. She waited eighteen days, then wrote on February 19:

I had hoped long before this to have done something efficient in your pecuniary concerns; but the important person is still from home. A letter received yesterday informs me of this again, and adds that he is expected daily. This has been the case for months. As soon as he reaches his place of destination, he will receive a visit from me. This is the only hope of success. Great Heaven! How truly miserable your situation renders me. What is to be done? Yet do not despair. Wait a little longer; perhaps the next packet may bring you all you wish. . . . Your acquaintance, Mr. Samuel Swartwout, arrived a few days since, out of spirits and disappointed. He has left us again with new courage. He has not contributed to enliven me. Already anxious and distressed about you, he has rendered me doubly so by the addition of unavailing regrets, and the dreadful conviction that I have been the cause of real injury to you by the delay my illness occasioned. This I had felt before, but it never appeared to me in its full extent till after my conversation with him. The poignant sufferings this idea has occasioned me are indescribable; and though my life has been saved by it, I cannot rejoice at it, from a



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belief that your happiness will greatly depend upon my existence. And can I then remunerate you for such sacrifices merely by living? Under every sort of misery this reflection would make me careful of life, as of a treasure which I have in keeping for you, to be spent in your service.

Colonel Burr had evidently written to his daughter that it was necessary for her to send him some money. She answered on the 31st of May, 1809; being then at the Oaks, in South Carolina:

Alas! how bitterly do I regret that it is not in my power to obey you. The conduct of your imagined friend is infamous beyond expression. No man alive to one single feeling of honour would have behaved thus. Now the embargo and non-intercourse acts are done away, and the re-animation of commerce has deprived him of the only apology he could have offered, I shall write to him and tell him much more openly my opinion, and sign my name at full length. But if this last effort should likewise fail, I know not what we can do. I sometimes, often, indeed, pass the night without closing my eyes, occupied in fruitless endeavors to suggest some mode of indemnifying you.

When Theodosia was young, Colonel Burr had expressed in a letter to his wife the hope that their daughter would never become a votary of fashion. In one of her letters she said: "I might have had a little court of gentlemen, but this sort of admiration, which is excited by trifles, is not worth the price that must be paid for it. The good-will of my own sex is preferable and a certain reserve respectable. I therefore received few male visitors, and did not encourage them to return often."

What Colonel Burr considered, in some respects, quite amusing, and which he greatly enjoyed, if the record made in his journal is accepted as being written in a serious manner, had a far different effect

upon his daughter. She wrote from Rocky River Springs, South Carolina, August 1, 1809:

Your removal from England was first announced to me by a paragraph in the newspapers; and for some minutes I remained stupefied, as if stunned by the blow. All hope of its falsehood is now annihilated by the receipt of your letter. Thus, then, has vanished all the pleasure I derived from reflecting on the advantages of your late residence, which was rendered as delightful as exile can be by identity of language, and by the attentions of friends perfectly congenial to you. . . . You undoubtedly saved my life by preventing me from coming here last year. The lodging is very bad; such as you have often had in your half-finished log cabins; the food to suit, and the mineral waters are positively poison to me. . . . I have written a second time to the gentleman who promised us the supply of funds; but there is little to be hoped from him. On inquiry, I find that his character does not stand very high as a man of punctilious honour in money dealings. The style of my last letter was open, and my name to it in full length. Perhaps he may be teased into a performance of his engagements. His conduct is a serious addition to all the accumulated difficulties which already pour in upon us, and which would absolutely overwhelm any other being than yourself. Indeed, I witness your extraordinary fortitude with new wonder at every new misfortune. Often, after reflecting on this subject, you appear to me so superior, so elevated above all other men, I contemplate you with such a strange mixture of humility, admiration, reverence, love, and pride, that very little superstition would be necessary to make me worship you as a superior being, such enthusiasm does your character excite in me. When I afterward revert to myself, how insignificant do my best qualities appear. My vanity would be greater if I had not been placed so near you; and yet, my pride is our relationship. I had rather not live than not be the daughter of such a man.

From Cheraw, South Carolina, on August 31, 1809, Theodosia wrote:

Reflection had already greatly reconciled me to your removal before the receipt of your letter, which has assisted to console me. Although I know that whatever might be your sufferings in any situation,

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you would prevent the infection from spreading to your friends as long as you possibly could, yet your assurances cheer me irresistibly. . . . I have written a second time to Judas. My letter cannot fail to reach him. It is written openly in my own name. Perhaps he may be driven to a compliance with his engagements. I mean to try.

In one of Theodosia's letters to her father, she mentioned that Frederic, her step-brother, had thought of going South and becoming a planter. The letter which follows was in the possession of a descendant of Frederic Prevost. A copy was supplied for use in this work. It has never before appeared in print. In it, Theodosia exerted all her powers of persuasion to induce her step-brother to come South and settle in South Carolina. The letter was written at Chevalos, a District of South Carolina, northeast of Waccamaw, September 12, 1809.

Your letter enclosing that from Washington reached me just before I left Springville. The long expected answer from Mrs. Madison was such as reason and experience unmingled with hope might have led us to suppose it. She expresses great affection for me, calling me her "precious friend," pays me compliments badly turned, and regrets that Mr. M. finds it impossible to gratify my wishes, &c. You will be more pleased to hear that I have received a letter from A. B., dated Gottenburg, where he arrived safely but with the loss of all his luggage. an accident he laughs at, although he is destitute of the means of procuring another supply. To my inexpressible relief he says that he has in view some means of support which will rescue him at present from this state of dependence. Yet I fear that he may say so merely to alleviate my anxiety, for what can he do at Stockholm?

Your few lines afflicted me. Could you for one instant imagine that I neglected you? You who are so near my heart, whom nature has made my friend by congeniality of character and feeling, by a thousand kind offices and the nearest ties of blood. Oh, Frederic, you do not yet know me. My silence was occasioned by severe illness which violent cold, and not the climate, had brought on me. But I

am now quite well and in a few days we shall set off for Greenville. Our plans relative to the mountain establishment have not altered in the least. We have already secured a house for the next year, and have paid a part of the rent for the purpose of repairs, and intend remaining in it till we can build one of our own. We propose leaving this part of the country in a few days on a tour which Mr. A's business renders necessary and which we shall terminate by a visit to Greenville. When there I shall inform you circumstantially of everything which can interest you, for I continue to think that you will no where else find a residence uniting so many advantages. From your letter you still appear to be in doubt about your removal, and Bartow's determination to settle in New York will, I suppose, render you still more averse to leaving it. But you should recollect that your individual gratification is not alone to be considered, however happy you may be in the society of a brother we both love, yet the advancement of your children is a more pressing and imperious consideration. The more I reflect on it, the more sensible I become to all the unceasing cares and mortifications which await you. Should your daughters grow up where they now are, with a small fortune, by hard labor, which as you grow older will be more and more oppressive, you will either have to maintain six unmarried daughters, or what is more probable, after suffering incessant anxiety, you will be doomed to see them marrying in a way which will humble you and place them in a state of poverty and struggle. At Greenwich and in the country around it, there are many men who from the smallest beginning, indeed from nothing, have by hard labor and economy and good luck, accumulated comfortable fortunes. These men educate their sons very respectably, and your situation, the standing you will take, must give your daughters the chance of settling comfortably on growing estates, in a country where everything is improving. This consideration alone should determine you. The pleasure which you, and the advantages which your children will derive from my presence and my care you can best determine the value of — and that the country is as healthful as Montpellier I can really assure you. Pray let me hear what you did with my letter to Clarke.

Burr continues well and improves daily. He and I both kiss your dear little family with all our hearts. Adieu. You shall hear from me immediately on my arrival at Greenville which will not take place very shortly, however; in the meantime, do not attrib-

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ute my silence to neglect. Adieu again. Direct to Oaks near Georgetown, S. C.

T.

On September 26, 1810, Burr wrote to his daughter from Paris:

Not a line from you since the letter of August, 1809, which was acknowledged from Gottenburg. . . . I have a few books for you, particularly dictionaries, but can send nothing by this opportunity. Gampillo has not been forgotten. My health is always the same; but I ennui here for want of you and your boy. My stock of nonsense to amuse you both increases daily, and we shall have a deal to laugh at.

He wrote again from Paris, on the 10th of November, 1810:

Alas, my dear Theodosia, I have no hope of seeing you this winter. It is more than five months since I have been constantly soliciting from this government a passport for America. Fair promises and civil words have been received, but nothing more. It would be folly to hope, yet daily some new occurrence or new promise inspires new hope. . . . The only consolation which I can offer you for this disappointment is that my health continues unimpaired, and I have the *present* means of support. A little addition to those means would not be inconvenient. Continue to write to that gentleman on whose unpaid notes I relied, and of which not a cent has been received. . . . Not a line from you since August, 1809, fifteen months ago. It is only by mere accident that I know you were living last July. . . . I live with a very amiable Genevoise family, of which I am a member. Every morning I devote half an hour, sometimes an hour, to you.

Whatever feelings of anxiety might have been experienced by Colonel Burr, they were felt in a much greater degree by his daughter. On January 8, 1811, she wrote to him from the Oaks:

At length I have had the happiness to receive intelligence from you in some degree satisfactory. Your letter of the 26th of September has come to relieve me from the state of daily, hourly expectation,

anxiety, and suspense in which I have remained for a year. Exactly twelve months ago I received a letter from you dated at Stockholm; in it you earnestly requested, or rather commanded, me to visit Charleston during the course of the winter. Of course, this made me suppose that you intended to be there. But instead of going to town, I went to bed, where I spent nearly three months. During my illness, the hope of seeing you, disappointment at your delay, and terror lest your silence might have been occasioned by some unfortunate accident, kept me in a state of mind little short of distraction.

Imagine to yourself the feelings of a woman whose naturally irritable nerves were destroyed by severe illness, and who, during weeks of solitude, and pain, and inoccupation, lay pondering incessantly, amid doubt and impatience, and hope and fear, on the subject which mingled through the whole extent of her soul. You who can so well and so singularly bring home to yourself the feelings of others, and adopt them when they are quite strange to you, think of my situation, and with me wonder that I did not go mad. . . . When will this gloom of absence pass away? When will your presence dawn upon me again? . . . On the subject of pecuniary affairs, I can say nothing pleasing. My husband has offered the two lower plantations for sale; but although the advertisement has continued for several months, no proposals were received. He would sell at almost anything, but the country is in a dreadful state. Everyone is trying to sell and no one will or can buy. Every article of clothing and groceries is higher than when you were here. Such is the situation of the country that even my husband condemns the present measures of government, and joins in the almost universal cry for free commerce or war, without delays or temporizing any longer. . . . Come home; you may without fear, come home. Make any sacrifice; risk anything, rather than continue to lead this unpleasant and unprofitable life.

Theodosia wrote again from the Oaks on February 14, 1811.

Your letter of 10th November last is just received. The difficulty you find in procuring a passport excites many unpleasant feelings. Will not any of your old friends assist you? Pray return as soon as possible. In dear New York you have many friends; and in Connecticut, I believe, a majority of the citizens are attached to you, a

greater proportion than in any other State in the Union. . . . Many of my letters have been lost. I have written to you frequently since August, 1809. I thank God that you have present means of support. Economize them; for even those who might be willing are, or will be, unable to assist you. This country (the United States) is in a deplorable condition. So many bankruptcies have taken place in New York, that even private amusements are affected by them. Here our produce will not sell; the necessities of life are high; creditors pressing; the newspapers filled with advertisements of property which finds no purchasers. . . . John Swartwout is true, invariably and nobly conspicuous as the sun. He retrieves the character of man. . . . Gampillo drinks your health every day and everywhere. He, too, has written to you often. The miscarriage of his letters he deems a great misfortune to you and himself.

Theodosia determined to aid her father, if possible, in his efforts to secure a passport and return to the United States. She wrote a letter to Mr. Gallatin, on March 9, 1811, being then at her home at the Oaks.

Though convinced of your firmness, still with the utmost diffidence I venture to address you on a subject which it is almost dangerous to mention, and which, in itself, affords me no claim on your attention. Yet, trusting that you will not withhold an opinion deeply interesting to me, and which your present station enables you to form with peculiar correctness, I venture to inquire whether you suppose that my father's return to this country would be productive of ill consequences to him, or draw on him farther prosecution from any branch of the government.

You will the more readily forgive me for taking the liberty to make such a request, when you reflect that, retired as I am from the world, it is impossible for me to gather the general opinion from my own observation. I am, indeed, perfectly aware how unexpected will be this demand; that it places you in a situation of some delicacy; and that to return a satisfactory answer will be to exert liberality and candour; I am aware of all this, and yet do not desist.

Recollect what are my incitements. Recollect that I have seen my father dashed from the high rank he held in the minds of his countrymen, imprisoned, and forced into exile. Must he ever remain thus



excommunicated from the participation of domestic enjoyments and the privileges of a citizen; aloof from his accustomed sphere, and singled out as a mark for the shafts of calumny? Why should he be thus proscribed and held up in execration? What benefit to the country can possibly accrue from the continuation of this system? Surely it must be evident to the worst enemies of my father, that no man, situated as he will be, could obtain any undue influence, even supposing him desirous of it.

But pardon me if my feeling has led me astray from my object, which was not to enter upon a discussion with you. I seek only to solicit an enlightened opinion relative to facts which involve my best hopes of happiness.

Present, if you please, my respects to Mrs. Gallatin, and accept the assurances of my high consideration.

THEODOSIA BURR ALSTON.

Not receiving encouragement from Mr. Gallatin, she addressed a letter to Mrs. Dolly Madison, the President's wife:

Madam:

You may perhaps be surprised at receiving a letter from one with whom you have had so little intercourse for the last few years. But your surprise will cease when you recollect that my father, once your friend, is now in exile; and that the President can only restore him to me and his country.

Ever since the choice of the people was first declared in favor of Mr. Madison, my heart, amid the universal joy, has beat with the hope that I, too, should soon have reason to rejoice. Convinced that Mr. Madison would neither feel nor judge from the feelings or judgment of others, I had no doubt of his hastening to relieve a man whose character he had been enabled to appreciate during a confidential intercourse of long continuance, and whom (he) must know incapable of the designs attributed to him. My anxiety on this subject has, however, become too painful to be alleviated by anticipations which no events have yet tended to justify; and in this state of intolerable suspense I have determined to address myself to you, and request that you will, *in my name*, apply to the President for a removal of the prosecution now existing against Aaron Burr.

Statesmen, I am aware, deem it necessary that sentiments of liberality, and even justice, should yield to consideration of policy; but what policy can require the absence of my father at present? Even had he contemplated the project for which he stands arraigned, evidently to pursue it any further would now be impossible. There is not left one pretext of alarm even to calumny; for bereft of fortune, of popular favor, and almost of friends, what could he accomplish? And whatever may be the apprehensions or the clamors of the ignorant and the interested, surely the timid, illiberal system which would sacrifice a man to a remote and unreasonable possibility that he might infringe some law founded on an unjust, unwarrantable suspicion that he would desire it, cannot be approved by Mr. Madison, and must be unnecessary to a President so loved, so honored. Why, then, is my father banished from a country for which he has encountered wounds and dangers and fatigue for years? Why is he driven from his friends, from an only child, to pass an unlimited time in exile, and that, too, at an age when others are reaping the harvest of past toils, or ought, at least, to be providing seriously for the comfort of ensuing years? I do not seek to soften you by this recapitulation. I only wish to remind you of all the injuries which are inflicted on one of the first characters the United States ever produced.

Perhaps it may be well to assure you there is no truth in a report, lately circulated, that my father intends returning immediately. He never will return to conceal himself in a country on which he has conferred distinction.

To whatever fate Mr. Madison may doom this application, I trust it will be treated with delicacy. Of this I am the more desirous as Mr. Alston is ignorant of the step I have taken in writing to you, which, perhaps, nothing could excuse but the warmth of filial affection. If it be an error, attribute it to the indiscreet zeal of a daughter whose soul sinks at the gloomy prospect of a long and indefinite separation from a father almost adored, and who can leave unattempted nothing which offers the slightest hope of procuring him redress. What, indeed, would I not risk once more to see him, to hang upon him, to place my child on his knee, and again spend my days in the happy occupation of endeavoring to anticipate all his wishes?

Let me entreat, my dear Madam, that you will have the consideration and goodness to answer me as speedily as possible; my heart is sore with doubt and patient waiting for something definitive. No

apologies are made for giving you this trouble, which I am sure you will not deem irksome to take for a daughter, an affectionate daughter, thus situated. Inclose your letter for me to A. J. Frederic Prevost, Esq., near New Rochelle, New York.

That every happiness may attend you,

Is the sincere wish of

THEO. BURR ALSTON.

Parton says: "This letter was probably not ineffectual. Certain it is that the government offered no serious obstacle to Burr's return, and instituted no further proceedings against him. Probably, too, Theodosia received some kind of assurance to this effect, for we find her urging her father not only to return, but to go boldly to New York, among his old friends, and resume there the practice of his profession. The great danger to be apprehended was from his creditors, who then had power to confine a debtor within limits, if not to throw him into prison."

Burr wrote to his daughter from Paris, April 1, 1811, or April Fool's Day:

No such epithet is attached to it here, nor any such application made of it. . . . With me every day for the last eight months has been fool's day; for almost every day I have been cajoled by some new device. A passport is all I ask, and thus far refused. . . . But to console you, know that Vanderlyn will sail for the United States some time in May. By him you shall know everything, and by him you shall have your books.

Theodosia wrote from the Oaks on May 10, 1811:

This morning, and not until this morning, did I receive your letter of the 10th of January, 1811. In this way has our correspondence been maintained for the last two years. Now I hear that you are coming immediately; and while wondering that you have not arrived, I learn that you will be detained much longer. Then my hopes are again awakened, and, when again almost exhausted, they light up with a

stronger, though a trembling brilliancy. The icy hand of disappointment falls upon my heart to smother every spark. Do not frown at these complaints. You do not. I will not believe that you do. Your image, kind and indulgent, is my guardian angel. From how many follies, how many faults, does it preserve me. It was accorded to me as a talisman, to cheer my prospects, to strengthen my resolutions, and incite me to noble efforts.

Theodosia then became indignant because her father had not been allowed a passport:

The refusal of your passports by the agent of our government is a most overbearing and insulting outrage upon the common rights of a citizen. Who erected an American *chargé d'affaires* into a supreme judge? Who invested him with the most important prerogatives? . . . At all events it is better to brave any storm than to be leading your present life. It is better that things be brought to a crisis you cannot entirely sink under; and, the worst once over, you will be free from all restraint. You may be situated as formerly. It cannot injure you more than this long-continued threat. *If the worst comes to the worst, I will leave everything to suffer with you.* . . . We go on as formerly. The family make me endure frequent vexations, but my husband is not to be swayed by their machinations, or moved by their endeavors to persuade him that, the more dear he is, the more hateful must I be; I, who have occasioned him so many hours of pain. This is not directly and openly expressed, but often insinuated. He is kind, attentive, and considerate towards me. My health is good; it would be very good if my mind were at ease. But cares corrode my heart and undermine my constitution, although my spirits are apparently excellent. . . . My son makes good progress, but at times he is seized with a singular kind of torpor; a heavy listlessness, which it is impossible to remove, because every weapon strikes without effect, and becomes incapable of producing any sensation. These fits do not last above a day at a time; and, as he is naturally lively, I can attribute them to nothing but seclusion. He needs companions to excite emulation in labour and hilarity at play. I am glad you intend sending him a little present. . . . Heaven guide your steps and direct your plans.

On July 11, 1811, Burr wrote from Paris: "The

letters of my dear little Gamp have not come. They will come, however, for I will ransack all Europe for them. By Vanderlyn will write to him."

Burr was to receive his passport, but peculiar pressure was needed to force the American chargé d'affaires to grant it. This needed pressure was applied by the Duke of Bassano, who wrote as follows, to Mons. Denon, on July 18, 1811: "*The person* through whom I could have communicated to Mr. Russell that he should *not* have refused a new passport to Mr. Burr was in the country. I wrote to *her* yesterday to return. *She* arrived at the moment that your note was received. I shall have the passport in the course of the day, and shall forward it immediately to the Duke (Rovigo), and I am convinced that you will receive it to-morrow to transmit to Mr. Burr."

Mr. Davis supplies the following explanation of Mr. Russell's change of heart: "Thus affairs were managed in France. The rightful claims of an American citizen for a passport were spurned for months by the *patriotic* Mr. Russell. But the French Minister (Bassano) knew the influence which would control the American chargé (Russell) and, therefore, Madame — was desired to come to Paris. Her presence in a few hours changed the stern decree of this *pure patriot*, and the passport was instantly granted." Those who possess copies of Aaron Burr's Journal will find confirmation of the preceding in the entries for July 16, 17, and 18, 1811.

We cannot forbear from quoting here a paragraph relating to General John Armstrong, who had been a classmate of Burr at Princeton, and who was

now United States Minister to France; Jonathan Russell, who was chargé d'affaires at Paris; and Mr. McRae, Consul at Paris, who had been one of the counsel for the prosecution at Burr's trial for high treason at Richmond. They formed a trio which combined their forces and used every endeavor to prevent Burr's return to his native land (84).

When one reflects if he had been allowed to leave France when he desired, that his daughter Theodosia might have been spared to be with him and care for him in his declining years, and that her own valuable life and that of her son might have been saved, the responsibility of these three political enemies of Burr becomes manifest. It should have caused them a lifelong regret, being an unnecessary sacrifice for which there could be no adequate requital in this world.

Burr sailed from the Texel on September 29, 1811, in the American ship *Vigilant*, bound to Boston. On the same day the *Vigilant* was captured by a British frigate and sent to Yarmouth, England. Burr was allowed to land and went at once to London. He found a letter from Jeremy Bentham, who was at his country residence, where he went and passed a week. By doing so, he missed a vessel commanded by Captain McNeil, which sailed for Charleston, S. C., while he was on his visit.

On February 6, 1812, Burr wrote to his daughter from London. It was not until this date that the ship *Vigilant* was freed on payment of costs amounting to eight hundred pounds sterling. Burr had paid his passage by her to America, but Jonathan Russell had been transferred to London, and again interfered to prevent Burr from obtaining a passport. In his letter Burr said: "The last of your letters which has come to hand is of April, 1810, which

gave me some ground of apprehension for your health. Ballston is your only remedy. The verbal accounts which I receive of you are very few and very unsatisfactory. All you say of the boy delights me. My profound respects to Mr. Aaron Burr Alston, and that I promise myself great pleasure in his society."

On Friday, March 27, 1812, he wrote in his Journal: "On board the ship *Aurora*, of Newburyport, Captain Potter, bound to Boston, now at anchor in the Thames, twenty-six miles below Gravesend. Captain Potter only, of all on board this ship, knows me; so far, at least, as I am informed. I came on board under the name of Arnot, and am so called. It will be very wonderful if this secret should be kept during the whole passage."

The last day of the homeward journey: "Boston Harbour, May 4, 1812. At four this morning land was discovered. At seven Cape Ann Lighthouse was shown to me. A pilot is in sight, and within two miles of us. All is bustle and joy, except Gamp. Why should he rejoice? At three P.M. we cast anchor off the Wharf at Boston."

He remained in Boston until May 30. He was obliged to sell some books in order to obtain his passage money to New York. Dr. Kirkland, President of Harvard College, was the purchaser, giving Burr the option of taking back the books and repaying the money when he should please to do so.

We give some brief extracts from his Journal. "May 29. Have embarked all my effects. Adieu, Boston. May 30, 1812. On board the sloop *Rose*, Captain Dimon, off Boston Harbour. The sloop

*Rose* is a *lëëlle teeny* thing of forty tons. Price (to New York) twenty dollars and found. *June 4, 1812.* On board the *Rose* off Mill River, Fairfield (Conn.)”

This was the town in which he had passed so much time when a young man, and where he met Dorothy Quincy, afterwards the wife of John Hancock. “I had been urged to accompany my cousin, Thaddeus Burr, on a fishing and shooting excursion. I have a mind to go to-morrow morning to renew my former acquaintance with all the inanimate objects; but then, the hazard of recognition; that is the rub. After breakfast the Captain rode out on horseback and I strolled three or four hours . . . in the neighborhood. Every object was as familiar to me as those about Richmond Hill, and the review brought up many pleasant and whimsical associations. At several doors I saw the very lips I had kissed and the very eyes that had ogled me in the persons of their grandmothers about six-and-thirty years ago. I did not venture into any of their houses, lest some of the grandmothers might recollect me.”

Burr was obliged to take passage in another vessel in order to reach New York, which he did on June 8, 1812. The last few lines of his Journal read thus: “Being already dressed (he passed his first night on shore in a cheap lodging house), I rose, paid for my lodging twelve cents, and sallied out to 66 Water Street, and then had the good luck to find Sam (Swartwout) alone. He led me immediately to the house of his brother Robert, and here I am, in possession of Sam’s room in Stone Street, in the City of New York, on the 8th day of June, anno dom. 1812. Just four years since we parted on this very place.”



To Theodosia now came the greatest affliction, the crowning sorrow of her life. On July 12, 1812, she wrote:

A few miserable days past, my dear father, and your late letters would have gladdened my soul; and even now I rejoice at their contents as much as it is possible for me to rejoice at anything. I have lost my boy. My child is gone forever. He expired on the 30th of June.

My head is not now sufficiently collected to say anything further. May Heaven, by other blessings, make you some amends for the noble grandson you have lost.

THEODOSIA.

A fortnight later Colonel Alston wrote to his father-in-law:

A few miserable weeks since, my dear sir, and in spite of all the embarrassments, the troubles, and disappointments which have fallen to our lot since we parted, I would have congratulated you on your return in the language of happiness. With my wife on one side and my boy on the other, I felt myself superior to depression. The present was enjoyed, the future was anticipated with enthusiasm. One dreadful blow has destroyed us; reduced us to the veriest, the most sublimated wretchedness. That boy, on whom all rested; our companion, our friend — he who was to have transmitted down the mingled blood of Theodosia and myself — he who was to have redeemed all your glory, and shed new lustre upon our families — that boy, at once our happiness and pride, is taken from us — *is dead*. We saw him dead. My own hand surrendered him to the grave; yet we are alive. But it is past. I will not conceal from you that life is a burden, which, heavy as it is, we shall both support, if not with dignity, at least with decency and firmness. Theodosia has endured all that a human being could endure; but her admirable mind will triumph. She supports herself in a manner worthy of your daughter.

We have not yet been able to form any definite plan of life. My present wish is that Theodosia should join you, with or without me, as soon as possible. My command here, as brigadier-general, embarrasses me a good deal in the disposal of *myself*. I would part

with Theodosia reluctantly; but if I find myself detained here, I shall certainly do so. I not only recognise your claim to her after such a separation, but change of scene and your society will aid her, I am conscious, in recovering at least that tone of mind which we are destined to carry through life with us.

I have great anxiety to be employed against Quebec, should an army be ordered thither, and have letters prepared asking of the president a brigade in that army. From the support which that request will have, if not obtained now, I doubt not that it will be at the first increase of the military force, which, if the war be seriously carried on, must be as soon as Congress meet. Then, be the event what it may, I shall at least gain something. Adieu.

Yours with respect and regard,

JOSEPH ALSTON.

Just a month after Theodosia informed her father of the death of her boy, she wrote him again from Seashore:

Alas! my dear father, I do live, but how does it happen? Of what am I formed that I live, and why? Of what service can I be in this world to you, or anyone else, with a body reduced to premature old age, and a mind enfeebled and bewildered? Yet, since it is my lot to live, I will endeavor to fulfill my part, and exert myself to my utmost, though this life must henceforth be to me a bed of thorns. Whichever way I turn, the same anguish still assails me. You talk of consolation. Ah! You know not what you have lost. I think Omnipotence could give me no equivalent for my boy; no, none — none.

I wish to see you, and will leave this as soon as possible, though not so soon as you propose. I could not go alone by land, for our coachman is a great drunkard, and requires the presence of a master, and my husband is obliged to wait for a military court of inquiry, which he demanded and is ordered on him. It will sit on the 10th of August. How long it will be in session, I know not. After that we shall set off, though I do not perceive how it is possible to speak with certainty, because Mr. Alston has the command of a brigade here. When we do go, he thinks of going by water, but it is not determined. It will probably be late in August before we go. God bless you, my

beloved father. Write to me sometimes. What do you wish done with your papers, if I should go by land?

I have been reading your letters over again. I am not insensible to your affection, nor quite unworthy of it, though I can offer nothing in return but the love of a broken, deadened heart, still desirous of promoting your happiness, if possible. God bless you.

THEODOSIA.

What words could be used to show more intensely the desolation of a bereaved mother's heart than those penned by her own trembling hand? The thousands upon thousands of mothers who have felt the same poignant shaft are the only ones who can fully understand, who can fully sympathize with such a sorrowful condition. The consolation that religion affords points to a meeting in the future — in Heaven, where we shall know our own.

“Oh, when a Mother meets on high,  
The Babe she lost in infancy,  
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,  
The day of woe, the watchful night,  
For all her sorrow, all her tears,  
An over-payment of delight?”

## CHAPTER XIII

### HER FATHER IN EXILE

**T**HEODOSIA'S life was a sacrifice due to two primary causes — the Southern climate and her father's erratic career. The first cause undermined her constitution and shattered her health; the second affected her mentally. Not being able to recruit physically, her nerves became more and more unstrung. It is a wonder that she did not have our modern disease — nervous prostration; perhaps she did, although it was not called by that name.

She was a beautiful, transplanted Northern flower, but the change to a Southern clime did not agree with her. From the sodden rice field near her home a miasma arose — an earth-born poison which infected the atmosphere. She was aware of this, for in one of her letters to her husband she begged him not to go out until the sun was high and the unhealthy mist was burned away by the sun.

We must not blame the physicians of those days, for they represented the advanced medical thought — *of the time*. No physician now would treat malaria with mercury; he would rely upon that supreme preventative — and often cure — quinine. The doctors, in 1799, treated Washington's sore throat by bleeding, so we ought not to be surprised that the remedy did not fit the disease in Mrs. Alston's case. It is probable that her son's fits of stupor, to which she referred in the letter to her father.

were due to malaria, and his death to its attendant fever.

While Theodosia was suffering both physically and mentally, going from South to North, and then back again; from shore to mountain, and then to shore again, in the hope of winning back the strength to her body and the roses to her cheeks, what was her father doing? Where was he, and how did he fare?

Reference has been made to the "Journal" kept by him during his residence in Europe, from 1808 to 1812. He visited England, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Germany, and France, paying a second but unwilling visit to England. When he left it finally, he wrote in his Journal: "I shake the dust off my feet. Adieu, John Bull! *Insula inhospitabilis*, as it was truly called 1800 years ago."

No one can justly estimate the man unless he has read this daily transcript of his thoughts and actions. Judged by modern standards, there is much in it to condemn from a moral point of view. A study of history shows like dereliction in the lives of many great men — some of whom were afterwards made saints.

Burr was a natural raconteur. He was a facile writer — concise, witty, philosophical, pathetic, by turns. Through it all is shown his dominant, abiding love for his daughter and grandson. She appears constantly in its pages; sometimes as Theodosia; more often as Theo. The initials "T. B. A." occur frequently; in many instances only the letter "T" is used, but whatever the form of identification, the love, the interest, is always there, though often tempered by mild, or even stern, reproof. The

school-teaching habit, probably inherited, adhered to him to the last, and he never failed to encourage his daughter to improve her mind, and to avoid *ennui* by occupation. He usually referred to himself in both letters and Journal as "A. B."

When his grandson, Aaron Burr Alston, first tried to say "grandfather" or "grandpa," his infant lips could only form the word "Gampy." This childish speech so pleased Burr that he called the boy "Gamp," or "Gampillo," or by the Latin form "Gampillus." He often referred to himself as "Gamp," meaning, of course, "grandfather." In a few instances he used the initials "A. B. A."

It has been the custom of biographers, historians, and writers of articles, stories, or books, to refer to Burr's life in Europe as a period of continual privation. He is depicted as an exile, an outcast, welcome in no man's house, an honored guest at no man's table. To change entirely this opinion, it is only necessary to read the Journal. The edition published in 1838 is virtually out of print; that issued in 1903 was limited to 250 copies, thus rendering it inaccessible to the great reading public. It covers 900 octavo pages, being in two volumes. If reprinted and sold at a reasonable price, it would certainly have a large sale.

It is proposed in this volume to cull from the Journal what are deemed the most interesting passages relating to his daughter and grandson, together with conclusive testimony that while abroad he met the shining lights in science and literature, was well received by them, as also by government officials, and members of the nobility, and even royalty. It

was not until he reached France, and during his second visit to England, that his finances fell to a low level. Money due him in America was not paid; but his money troubles were due principally to the political animosity of General John Armstrong, Jonathan Russell, and Samuel McRae, whose individual, and oftentimes combined, opposition to his receiving a passport kept him in Europe two years longer than he intended to stay. Through it all he was the philosopher, the man of iron will, and despite the constant and powerful touches of adversity, he retained his good-nature and health, and said very little against those who had so spitefully treated and abused him.

The writer hopes to be excused for presenting in what may be called a statistical form the results of a tabulation made of certain information contained in the Journal. Colonel Burr was absent four years; during that time he had 52 invitations to breakfast, 199 to dinner, and 67 to luncheon, tea, or supper. He made it a rule never to accept an invitation to a meal unless he had the means to buy one for himself. One day he would dine in princely fashion, and the next content himself with potatoes roasted in the ashes of his grate, with a sour French wine for drink, and a bunch of grapes for dessert. His rides and walks, by invitation, numbered 46; there were 166 persons who called upon him, and he made 653 visits of a business or social nature.

With these facts before us, it cannot be truthfully said that during his sojourn in Europe he was an outcast or a recluse.

And now, after this general preparation for our

journey, we will accompany him on his travels, omitting reference to his passage to England, and beginning with his acquaintance with Jeremy Bentham, who became, and always remained, his friend.

Amiable simplicity of Jeremy Bentham. He was interested in the picture of Theo. "Dear little creature. Let her take care."

At Ridgeway's; left with Madame, an obliging woman, a memorandum of books for A. B. A.

To Duval's to dine at five. A family party. The counsellor, Lewis, very intelligent. I had lent for a few days the picture of Theodosia, which was hung up there and employed more of my thoughts than the dinner and company. We drank her health, etc.

Called at Madame Duval's to thank her for the pretty manner in which the picture was sent home. She said rolling injured it; and she had procured a very handsome portfolio, made just to receive it; an attention which very much pleased me.

To Achaud's; saw Madame only; gave instructions about the letters they are to write to Portsmouth, Falmouth, and Liverpool, to secure the reception of T.

(He hoped that his daughter would join him in Europe.)

Called at Herries and Farquar's, St. James Street, agents of the late Colonel Charles Williamson to see for letters from T. None! None!

Sent Tom with the packet for T. He put it into the mail for Falmouth.

Gamp was tired and stopped a quarter of an hour to eat a jelly cake. 8 pence.

It is in the evening only that I wrote to you in this manner. Called at Madame W's. on my return. She says that several have called without leaving their names; perhaps someone with letters from you. The sight of your handwriting would make a jubilee in my heart.



I refused a bed at Madame Prevost's, being more at my ease to smoke my segar and tell little Theo what I have been about. But I don't tell her half, nor quarter; these are only notes to write from. Afraid to write *out*.

It has been assumed by those who are prone to place wrong conceptions on such sentences as the last one in the preceding extract, that Colonel Burr did not write out his notes because they were improper. It should be borne in mind, however, that Colonel Burr was in a foreign country, an object of suspicion, and fearful that his papers would be seized by the British government, as they were afterward. Having been hunted for months by officers in his own country, and knowing that the American representatives resident in England were aware of his presence in that country, it seems only natural that he should have taken precautions as regards entries in his private journal, and in writing letters which might fall into the hands of his enemies. The fact is that his letters to America were not addressed to his daughter, but were sent as inclosures to a friend in New York, by whom they were remailed. While in Europe, he established certain agencies for the receipt of his letters and papers, which in turn were remailed to him.

Madame Colonel P. gave letter to her brother at Liverpool, to whom she also wrote about T.

I know you will rave like a Juno if you are not told what I do and where I go every day.

Here is poor Gamp at 2 in the morning, at Queen's Square Place, writing nonsense to T. B. A., having let all his fire go out, and the last candle just gone.

Among the literary men of England I have met M'Kenzie, author of "Man of Feeling," and Scott, author of the "Minstrel." I met both frequently and from both received civilities and hospitality. M'Kenzie has twelve children — six daughters, all very interesting and handsome. He is remarkably sprightly in company, amiable, witty — might pass for 42, though certainly much older. Scott, with less softness than M'Kenzie, has still more animation; talks much and is very agreeable.

(At this time M'Kenzie was 64 and Sir Walter Scott 38.)

Arbuthnot called and brought me a letter from T. B. A.

Poor little dear T., you are rivalled, but not superceded nor even diminished in my affections, but another is associated with our joint existence — another who will love you as I do.

Sent my letter to the post office, having enclosed to J. B., Theo's letter of December 5th and Clara's.

Clara was Madame d'Auvergne, better known as Leonora Sansay, author of "The Horrors of St. Domingo," etc.

At Bentham's found your letter of the 3d of January, and one of September.

Breakfast at nine. Till two bringing up the journal for T.

Answer from Humphrey. He had no further communication with T. or W. and asks my determination.

Read over my letters of November and December to T. and by examining the sailing of the packets, am in hopes that she got my duplicates by the Princess Amelia, which is said to have sailed December 8th and arrived January 27th. Quite renovated by this discovery.

To William Graves, whence sent express to Queen Square Place for my letters. He returned just as we were seated in the post-chaise, with a letter from T.

Jeremy Bentham lived in Queen's Square Place.

The preceding extracts have been taken from Colonel Burr's Private Journal while he was in England. From that country he proceeded to Sweden.

As the packet will sail to-morrow for Harwich, and the mail closes this evening at 5, wrote a postscript to my letter to T. B. A. and a letter to W. Graves about my trunk, enclosing to him the two letters for T. B. A.

He (Hosack) has got "Davis' Travels," in which it seems you and I are mentioned.

Your picture was opened and put up in my parlor about ten days ago. It has been very greatly admired and given occasion to many inquiries.

To Breda's to see about your picture. Nothing yet done, but his son promises to do it, and I am sure he will.

Breda was a celebrated Swedish painter of portraits.

To Breda's. Nothing yet done to your picture, except putting it in a frame.

To Breda's, where I passed an hour looking at your picture. I was exceedingly struck and alarmed to see it pale and faded. Perhaps it may arise from being placed among his portraits, which are very high coloured, yet the impression that it is faded is fixed on my mind and has almost made me superstitious.

To Helvig's; sat an hour; gave to her servant a note to Breda requesting him to bring the picture for her inspection.

This morning called at Breda's to see your picture. It has been varnished and is perfectly restored. It is very much (and very justly) admired. How much I wish I could get a copy made by Breda.

At half past seven to Breda's, where we talked a great deal about Theodosia. "Good God," says he, "pardon the freedom, but can any man on earth be worthy of that woman and know how to estimate her. Such a union of delicacy, dignity, sweetness, and genius, I never saw. Is she happy?" He almost shed tears.

To d'H. Madame and M<sup>lle</sup> sitting on the grass; *me belle* Mary Ann (only think, your favorite name) becoming daily more interesting.

His letters to his daughter Theodosia were addressed to Mary Ann Edwards.

At twelve to Breda's to see the picture. He has placed it among all the Goth and Vandal beauties and they are really beautiful, but all in the shade by your presence. This and Davis has given you great renown here.

A previous reference has been made to Davis' Travels. Possibly Matthew L. Davis is meant. He was one of Burr's most intimate friends; wrote his memoirs; edited the Journal, and wrote constantly for the newspapers. For a time he sent letters from Washington to the New York Courier and Enquirer, under the pen name of "A Spy in Washington." He also wrote for the London Times, signing his letters "The Genevese Traveler." It may be that it was to Davis' letters to the London Times that Burr refers.

M<sup>lle</sup> Ulrick. She is beautiful, very beautiful, about 15, nearly your size and form.

Went to Breda's to take a book. You had a bluish cast this morning which I did not like.

To-morrow shall write you stylographically on the water. *Bon soir*. Curse those swamps and the latitude of 35. Now you feel it. Alas, where are those roses which cost an empire to restore!

Burr refers to the malarial conditions where Theodosia resided. He was alarmed for her health.

Turnberg's. He offered me a copy of his "Travels" in Swedish, which I very foolishly declined. He answered with great cheerfulness my question about Japan. I had made notes so that nothing might be forgotten. Pray, read his "Travels"; they will answer you much

and then you may question me. You may believe every word he writes. You are perhaps ignorant that in Japan women are as free as in any part of Europe, and I think rather more so, but I cannot now (perhaps never) commit to writing all he says.

At ten to Breda's to pay my respects to the picture; found it in good order and looking, alas, I fear, very different from the original.

To Breda's to see your picture and to talk to him. He is one of the most sensible, well-bred men I meet; his son, too, only 21, is a youth of extraordinary talents and amiable disposition.

Yesterday opened your picture. It is in perfect order. Luning's contrivance had secured it completely from the dust. Since opening it (at Stockholm) I have carried it the whole way, two hundred miles, on my lap. Indeed, madame, you bothered me not a little. You are now hung up in my room so that I can talk with you.

A letter, a letter, a letter! At a moment when I had given up all expectation and even all hope. At 5 P. M., this same Tuesday, came in a tall, meagre, well-dressed man, and asked if I were A. B. "Yes." He handed me a letter superscribed in your handwriting. It is your letter of the 1st and 2d August. I could have kissed the fellow.

With great trepidation I opened the picture on Sunday morning. It has suffered no injury. It hangs in my room. But I am quite out of humor that my visitors have expressed only commonplace admiration for it. Yesterday M<sup>lle</sup> de Coningk expressed a desire to see it, and thither you go to-morrow.

I shall make some addition to Gampy's stock here. You can't think what trouble the little varlet has brought me into.

Burr had promised to make a collection of foreign coins for his grandson.

The picture has come on my lap. I could not bear to see you bouncing about in the bottom of the wagon, but I shall not open it again till Hamburg (Germany). My companions are asleep, and now at 11, having had my bed warmed, much the mode here, I am also going to make up the arrears of the last two nights, having ordered breakfast at seven and the pretty maid to wake me at six. Let me see,

how are you now employed? Probably at breakfast with Gampy asking you an hundred of questions about — God knows!

Done, even the picture; all, all packed, ready for starting at sunrise. I bid you *bon soir* a dozen times before I shut you in that dark case. I can never do it without regret. It seems as if I were burying you alive.

Your picture gave me a great deal of plague, and but for J. I should never have got it well put up. I have a great mind to roll you up again and pack you away in the trunk, though your great and good friend Breda so strongly remonstrated against it. He also varnished and put you in a frame for mere love.

I did come in on an open wagon last night, and was from seven till one o'clock — six hours — coming a little more than three miles. You who love so to ride fast would die to go at this rate. I could walk much faster; but then, how transport my little trunk and the picture?

At length I yielded to the solicitations of Eleonora and Doris, and opened the picture. No small labor, for, to secure it more perfectly, I had covered it with cartridge paper, sealed down to the edge of the box, and over that the lid tied by a hundred cords. It was in perfect order and was greatly admired. Of course, a thousand questions about you. The girls did it up again without my aid.

The common fuel is turf, which is very pleasant for stoves, and so very cheap that Mr. L. who has a large family and a house as big as six of yours at the Oaks, told me that his fuel cost him but 12 louis (about \$50.00) per annum.

The "Oaks" was the name of Theodosia's residence at Georgetown, South Carolina.

Oh, I forget to tell my dear little Gampy; he would have jumped out of his skin to see it: such a family and such music, but I must give him the particulars. The principal personages were: 1, a jackass; 2, two monkeys dressed in regimentals, one in green, the other in scarlet; 3, an enormous bear; 4, drummer and bagpiper. But they did dance in such a style, and the monkeys played so many tricks to the poor bear, and Mr. Bear did so growl, and Gamp did so laugh. But I'll tell him all about it next time.

The Duke extremely gay. Having said that I had your picture, after dinner he insisted that I should send for it, which was done by one of the huissiers. You were exhibited and sufficiently admired. His highness was quite gallant to you.

At 10 came in Mr. de Kunkel to thank me in the name of his highness, and in his own, and make compliments, etc. I gave him yesterday a small Swedish coin, having a good likeness of Gustavus IV, which he gave to his highness, and whereupon they had the politeness to set great value. It is one of Gampy's collections, but I have the like or would not have given it to any Prince or Princess in Europe.

The Duke perfectly amiable; renewed the subject of your picture; found a great deal of fault with the painter. He has taste and skill in all the fine arts. In the original, said he, there must be dignity, majesty, gentleness, sensibility — all discernible in the picture, but imperfectly expressed; would leave a copy if there were time; promised to send him one.

I much wished for your sake to have visited the old Chateau of Wartzbourg, which is on the summit of the mountain overhanging this town. You can imagine nothing more romantic than the site. It has been famous in story more than 300 years. It is a fine ruin, but part habitable and inhabited.

Think to buy you a dictionary and something for Gampy to be sent to Hamburg.

At the time of writing, Colonel Burr was in Frankfort, Germany.

The supper elegant and the guests extremely gay. Somehow, I thought more of Mary Ann than of all present.

As previously noted, Mary Ann was a name given by Burr to his daughter.

To Madame Vandervelten, our cousin. Yesterday sent for her to inspect the picture, about which many pretty things were said.

To Vanderlyn, with whom I left the picture to be put into the hands of an engraver.

At this time, Colonel Burr was in Paris.

The Critical Dictionary of Synonyms, not pretending to be a complete dictionary of the language, in three volumes, may, at the same time, be had for 36 francs. The last two I shall buy for you, and the new edition of the dictionary. But how they are to be got out to you, is a circumstance not yet foreseen, all commerce on both sides being prohibited.

Went to the medal mint to see for medals for Gampy, but had no success.

Thence home and to the Imperial Library to see Haase, who promised to aid me about medals. What running I have had about that little rascal's medals! Haase conducted me through the departments of engravings and manuscripts; showed me the most ancient Greek and Latin which are of the fourth century; the original love-letters of Henry IV, some by Charlemagne, etc. No medals can be had there but antiques and those in sulphur — too fragile and too dull to suit Gampy. I got, however, an address to one whom, it is said, something in this way may be had. But my reputation is gone. Everywhere announced as a numismatician. I shift it all on you. It is you and not me who are scientific in medals.

At ten came in Madame Paschaud's clerk to see about packing up your books. I was astonished to see the mass when put together. At least four cubic feet. But, alas, the greater part worthless stuff which has been imposed on me in different places. We resolved, at length, to transport the whole to Paschaud's and there have the inventory and the packing.

Now, madame, shall tell you a secret. Despairing of any success in my project, a few days ago asked passport to go to the United States, which was refused. Asked one to go to Rouen, to see M'e Langworthy, which was granted, to circulate for a year, which was more than I asked or wanted. Was told that I could not have a passport to go out of the empire. Here I am a State's prisoner, and almost without a cent.

Sportsmen shoot ducks and their dogs jump out of the boat, swim to the killed duck and bring him on board. How Gampy would laugh and stare.



Forgot to say that I had yesterday a letter from Luning's father, very amiable, and to-day another from our cousin, John Gottlieb Burr, giving the history of his family, which will give me some trouble to translate and then to reply in German. You did not know before I told you, and I have not told you yet, huzzy, that you are a Dutchman. But alas, in my affairs, no passport, no advance, no money.

Good evening, dear Theodosia!

Yesterday, no, it was Tuesday, the weather changed, and it is now so cold that I should be glad of a fire, but to that there are great objections, for what would become of the fifty plays, and of something. I won't tell you what, which I meditate to buy for Gampillo, that will make his heart kick.

Observe how very reasonable and sage I have been for ten days. I never spend a livre that I do not calculate what pretty thing I might have bought for you and Gampillo; hence my economy.

To Griswold's where I took a second breakfast. He let me have 2,000 francs, about \$333, for which I gave a receipt, containing a request for you to pay it in case I should not pay it within a year. This will enable me to get to America, if I should ever get a passport. Passed two hours with G. You know I always thought he had one of the most acute, logical heads of our country.

It is known that all foreign letters go to the police for examination. If you have written me, your letter has not been delivered. Perhaps you had a few words of cipher; if so, I shall never see it.

Home to write, but could send you nothing, not knowing a single person in Philadelphia to whom I could trust a parcel to you.

Have laid out a louis in grammars, dictionaries, and some other books, for which expense I console myself they will be useful to you and Gampillo. Wrote you another letter, and one to Hosack, with a parcel for each of you, and went to Vanderlyn's with them. He went to Warden's, who, learning that the letters and parcels were from me, would not take them.

Thence to Quai de Voltaire, where I bought three little books of Spanish dialogues, for I am resolved to read the language, and besides, they will do for you and Gampillo

Was this morning at Le Dour's to look at watches for self and Gampillo. Self, I think, will not get one.

I have been reading two hours in Cabanis. It is, I think, of all the books which I have bought for you, that which will afford you the most satisfaction. It is exactly in your line, being at once medical and philosophical; and so, good night.

Off again to Vanderlyn's before breakfast. He was just getting up (9 o'clock); has become a little lazy. He promised me a copy of your picture, which has been in his hands for the purpose now five months. For the last four he has not touched it.

I live very temperately and take moderate exercise, and have no fatigue of mind, except when I think of your being in those vile swamps.

Have I told you that Duc de Alberg says if I can get a certificate from the American consul, I shall have no further difficulty about a passport? Hence my application to Mr. Russell and to McRae. If the latter answers insolently, the only revenge I will take, for revenge, you know, is not in my nature, will be to publish his letter.

Bought you twelve volumes of different things (octavos) for 14 livres. Think I will buy you no more, except a few plays and some pretty books for Gampillus.

To-morrow will come the wash-woman for 4 francs 10 sous. I shall be obliged to sacrifice some of the nice little pieces which I intended to keep for Gampillo.

Alas! my lame foot has already cost me a louis in cab hire and medicaments. What pretty things that louis would have bought for Gampillo.

Some time ago, Madame R., showing me her jewels, seemed particularly pleased with a — and ear-ring of Italian sculpture out of conch shell. Of course, I admired them. To-day she made them a present to you. I declined as long as I could, for though they are pretty as curiosities, they are things not for you to wear. Still, they are very pretty to stare at and so you shall have them.

The dinner cost 7 francs, and lost a cambric handkerchief. Not

one of yours, they were all sold, you know, in Stockholm, except four which I have yet.

Casting about for ways and means, no one occurred to me but that of robbing poor little Gampy. I opened his little treasure of coins and medals to see what could be spared, and finally seized one Spanish dollar (thaler) of Charles VII, and two Swedish thalers of Gustavus IV. With these I went off to a changeur, who gave me 5 francs, 5 sous each, making in the whole 15 francs 15 sous.

Forgot to tell you that I did on Thursday rob Gampy of another Swedish coin, to pay my woman-grocer for the cheese.

Played an hour Wolves and Sheep with Valkenaer, and he beat me every game. It is a charming game for Gampy, and I will teach it to him and Gampilla (Theodosia).

Vanderlyn has not sent the picture to Fenwick. The lazy dog! But he is about to model your head in plaster, which if he does, shall forgive him many sins.

At five to Madame Fenwick's to dine tête-a-tête, as usual. Your picture was there and you were the principal topic. She thinks it worth a voyage to America to see you, and I told her I had written you that it was worth a voyage to France to see her.

Yesterday was cold, and to-day colder. Quite winter; the gutters are all frozen up hard. Put on my flannel waistcoat this morning, as I wear no surtout, for a great many philosophic reasons; principally because I have not got one. The old great-coat which I brought from America still serves in travelling if I should ever again travel. Happy New Year, mother and Gampy! Ah! I caught you both! The clock is now striking 12. (December 31st, 1810.)

Madame, the business is to show him your portrait, and to know for how much I can have it enamelled on a watch. Also that of Gamp, to enamel on another watch, to replace the lost Lepine.

Now, if I can get a passport to Bremen and Amsterdam, I will send you a million of francs within six months; but one-half of it must be laid out in pretty things. Oh, what beautiful things I will send you! Gampillus, too, shall have a beautiful little watch, and at least fifty trumpets of different sizes.

To Hahn's, whom I took with me to Vanderlyn's to look at your picture and estimate the expense of an enamelled copy in miniature, to put on a watch for Gampy as soon as I get possession of my fortune.

Wrote you and mentioned sending some books for Gampy; but when the letter was finished could not find the books. Sent the letter without alteration, and you will think someone has stolen the books.

My dear Theodosia, I am sick at heart, having made the most afflicting of all discoveries, the perfidy of a friend. A few days ago, slight suspicion was excited in my mind, as you may recollect, but I rejected it as unworthy of him and unworthy of me. It is confirmed with every circumstance of aggravation. I had built on it the hopes of my fortune. He pledged solemnly his honour to speak of it to no one without my leave; not to take a step, but in concurrence with me, on terms we had agreed. He went, I believe, the same day, disclosed the whole, and associated himself with another to take it wholly from me. The worthy object is irrevocably lost; for even if he should repent, he cannot take back his lost communications. This man first sought me under very peculiar circumstances; such as denoted generosity of sentiment, sensibility, and independence of mind.

Why need I go to Paris? Indeed, I can't exactly tell you; but a thousand nothings, of which, probably, the most important are to buy Gampy some beautiful marbles and you some silk stockings.

What a pity that I have not 50 guineas to buy you lace here. Oh, what a quantity you would have!

Again and again I pray you to recollect that this is not a journal to read, but mere notes from which to talk or speak, like a lawyer. It is my brief, from which I shall make you and Gampillo many and many a speech.

But Burr was destined never to see either daughter or grandson.

At 3 took Vanderlyn to the enameller's. He will make a horrid thing, and I fear you will be little pleased, except with my endeavours to please you.

Gampillo's letters are all lost. A greater loss to me than the works

of Menander or Tacitus. My dear Theodosia, how well you write. You must write a book. I have got the subject, but have no time to talk of this now.

Bought Gampy a pretty seal, on which I will have his initials engraved. Bought you also six pretty stones for seals or rings. All 10 francs.

Have got my passport. Shall go to-morrow. Have your watch. Have brought you nothing, nor for my poor, dear little Gamp. Shall bring you nothing but myself.

I have paid the Captain 480 guilders, which is equal to about 50 louis. But how did I raise this? The reply contains a dreadful disclosure. I raised it by the sale of all my little meubles and loose property. Among others, alas! my dear little Gamp's. It is shocking to relate, but what could I do? The Captain said it was impossible to get out of town without 500 guilders. He had tried every resource and was in despair. The money must be raised, or the voyage given up. So, after turning it over and looking at it, and opening it, and putting it to my ear like a baby, and kissing it, and begging you a thousand pardons out loud, your dear, little beautiful watch was — was sold. I do assure you — but you know how sorry I was. If my clothes had been saleable, they would have gone first, that's sure. But heighho! when I get rich I will buy you a prettier one.

On September 16, 1811, Burr arrived at Amsterdam. The vessel upon which he sailed from that city was captured by a British frigate, and the passengers were taken to Yarmouth, in England.

Behold my destiny accomplished! I am going to Africa. When shall I see you, my dear children? But will wait for a reply to my letter before going.

It is already within a few days of six months since I left Paris on my way to the United States and then believing I should see you in six weeks, and now, on the 14th December, am farther from you than I was on the 14th of July.

The moment of my arrival in London, shall sell all my books,

your books, poor little Gampillo; and all my clothes, save two shirts, and put the thing in execution; and so soon as I get this million, Lord! What pretty things I shall buy for thee and Gampillo! Laid out, however, a great deal of money last night. Thought of the faithful in the United States.

This is Christmas eve. I have no compliments to make or receive in this country, and you are probably at Oaks with Gampillo and as little annoyed with visits as myself. Merry Christmas! The clock strikes 12. The cries of watchmen; are now ringing small bells and repeating something which, by the cadence, is verse; but though I have opened my windows, I cannot distinguish a word.

After hunting an hour for something to sell, particularly for the diamond watch, could not find it, but found six suit of ribbons which I had bought for you at Palais Royal; in all twenty-eight yards. After gazing at them, and painting to myself the pleasure they would give, as being my taste and evidence of my recollection in all places, I reluctantly resolved to sell them if I could get \$50.00. They cost \$70.00 but they are pretty and *here* new.

D. M. R. left the ribbons with a lady of fashion who was charmed with them, and he thinks he will get more than \$50.00. If so, I hope you will not regret the robbery nor condemn. Don't think, Gampillo, that you are to escape. I have serious thoughts of offering in the lump the residue of your coins and medals. Trash, indeed, but here happens to be a medal-monger who may value such trash, and if he should offer 10 guineas they are gone — gone.

The ship *Vigilant*, which was captured by the British frigate, was finally released by the British government. Colonel Burr had paid his fare to America on this vessel, but the United States consuls at London and Yarmouth ordered the Captain of the *Vigilant* not to accept Burr as a passenger, and threatened the Captain with the displeasure of the United States government if he disobeyed.

I hasten to tell you, my dear Theo, that I am perfectly well, for I know how impatient you are to hear.

Burr still made an effort to secure passage on the *Vigilant*, but he did not wish to go to New Orleans. He wrote in his Journal:

I have strong objections to going to New Orleans, yet no alternative is seen but that of staying here. If I should think of residing permanently here, I could find the means of support, but I prefer to have my throat cut nearer you.

Every arrival makes me sad to reflect that I can have no letters, having interdicted you from writing. How many things have happened to you! I have often the most gloomy apprehensions.

I am pretty sure that my hostess has no suspicion of the state of the treasury, for on coming in I find a stock of coal and wood bought this day.

Got some things out of my trunk for sale, namely, half a piece of cambric which I had sealed up for you, and resolved to keep through thick and thin; but everything visible must go, or I shall lose the opportunity of this ship; and, as every day's delay diminishes my means, the longer I stay, the less likely am I to ever get out.

To Joyce's for the ring-watch; not done. That trinket must get me off, and yet I fear the ship will go before I get it.

To Joyce's, the watchmaker. Be assured he means to swindle me horribly. Said the ring-watch cannot be done in 10 days.

To Joyces', the watchmakers; two brothers, twin knaves. Nothing done. They told me twenty lies about the great difficulty of getting a glass. The watch is taken to pieces and I am wholly in their power. They mean to swindle me out of two or three guineas for doing nothing, and what is worse, I shall not get possession of the thing in time to aid me off. . . . After dinner went again to Joyce's. They told me the same lies over again about breaking six glasses, etc., but will fix no time when I can have it. It was with difficulty I forebore to call them rascals to their faces; but then they would undoubtedly spoil it with malice.

R. M. had sold the remnant of cambric for a guinea a yard and gave me 10 pounds. I then put into his hands eight handkerchiefs

of the same cambric to dispose of, being also those which had been folded up, sealed, and addressed to you. The ribbons and coins not yet sold, but he has hopes. Thus am I obliged to plunder you and Gampillo to the very last article.

After much inquiry found in this neighborhood a person who grinds glasses for watches. Gave him the form of the glass required for the ring-watch. He said he would make one for two shillings, and that I could have it to-morrow morning; but it was necessary he should have the watch to take exactly the form and size. And the Joyces have kept me 13 days, pretending the amazing difficulty of getting a glass of that form; that their workman has made as many essays but can't succeed. Shall go to-morrow morning and make another attempt to get it out of his hands, but almost despair, and am sure of a most exorbitant charge. The great watchsellers and the venders of manufactures of all sorts do nothing themselves or at their own houses. All the nice work is done by starved wretches who live in dens and garrets. None of these venders will on any account give you the address of one of these workmen. No, they themselves will get it done for you, and then charge from four to ten times the cost.

To Joyce's. Got the ring-watch, but did not get the bill. . . . To Godwin's and left the ring-watch with Madame for sale.

To Kynaston's, the glass-grinder, to get something done to a repeater. He could not do it. . . . It is he who is employed by the Joyces, and about whom they told me so many lies. They paid him 1 shilling, 6 pence.

Shall not write you again in London. Shall be too busy to think of you. No, that's a lie. Shall think of nothing else but you and Gampillo. It is you that animate and impel me.

It does not seem possible for me to go out without 20 pounds more, and I do not yet see where a shilling of it is to come from. Have again sent out the ring-watch by Graves, who is to try what can be done with it. Yet don't be discouraged, my children, for I will go.

How very awkward would be my position if the *Aurora* would sail without me. Without a rag of clothes or a penny of money, or any-



thing to make money of (Yes, the ring-watch, Graves could do nothing with it) I should be truly as a philosopher or as a pilgrim.

Off to Graves's to see about the Captain's movements. He had gone, actually gone, and left word that I must be at Gravesend to-morrow at noon, the hour the tide serves, or lose my passage. The case was now nearly desperate, 20 pounds being the very least sum that would clear me out. . . . Everything must go or I must stay. Every resource had now failed. Resolved on a desperate and humiliating experiment. Went direct to Reeves, and told him that the ship was gone to Gravesend, and that I must lose my passage unless I could have 20 pounds. Without a word of reply he drew a check of 20 pounds, and how I did gallop across the park to the banker's to get my 20 pounds. The first money I laid out was to buy four half eagles and one doubloon, together amounting to \$36, about 8 pounds, 7 shillings, so that on landing in America I might be able to get to you, or wherever else it might be my destiny to go. This disabled me from taking your picture-watch, so that after all the trouble and money the toy has cost me, I shall not have the pleasure of offering it to you.

Mr. and Mrs. Godwin would not give me their account, which must be 5 or 6 pounds; a very serious sum to them; but they say that when I succeed in the world, they will call on me for help.

And now at 12, having packed up my little residue of duds, into that same unfortunate little sack, and stowed my scattering papers into my writing case, I repose, smoking my pipe, and contemplating the certainty of escaping from this country, the certainty of seeing you. Those are my only pleasing anticipations. For as to my reception in my own country, so far as depends on the government, if I may judge from the conduct of their agents in every part of Europe, I ought to expect all the efforts of the most implacable malice. This, however, does not give me a moment's uneasiness. I feel myself able to meet and repel them. My private debts are a subject of some little solicitude; but a confidence in my own industry and resources does not permit me to despond, not even to doubt. If there be nothing better to be done, I shall set about making money in every lawful way. . . . My great and only real anxiety is for your health. If your constitution should be ruined, and you become the victim of

disease, I shall have no attachment to life or motive to exertion. . . . My next will be from on board ship, unless she should be gone, and then it will be most likely from some jail.

Really on board, my children, and thus far on my way to you. But what a job it has been! (Before leaving London) called and passed an hour at Godwin's. That family does really love me. Fanny, Mary and Jane, also little William; you must not forget, either, Hannah Hopgood, the painter. . . . Graves found a man who offered to put me on board for 2 guineas, and to return one guinea if the ship should be found within 12 miles. . . . I embarked just after sunset, the wind was strong at Southwest and very chilling. I had no greatcoat and was nearly perished. Got down the twelve miles, and heard that the ship was at least ten miles lower down. On promises of some grog got the boatman to stop at a little tavern on the riverside to warm myself. . . . Found a good fire and a good dish of tea.

Bought a bundle of straw for 9 pence, which took on board our little wherry, and made me a bed in the bottom of the boat. The boatmen lent me their greatcoats, which I had not before thought to ask, and I found myself well secured against the chilling winds. In five minutes I was sound asleep, and was unconscious of anything till I was waked to get into the *Aurora*, just at midnight, having come about 27 miles in this open boat. After some parleying, I got off for three guineas, being exactly all I had.

The Davis edition of the *Journal* contained, in addition to Colonel Burr's entries therein, 317 letters, of which Burr wrote 201 and received 106. He wrote many more, and received many more, during his stay in Europe, but these are the ones selected by Davis as being the most intimately connected with the text of the *Journal*. He wrote 35 letters to Theodosia and received 16 from her. Many of her letters to him were lost at sea, or were never delivered by the postal authorities, for if found to contain writing in cipher they were promptly confiscated and destroyed, as they are in Russia at the

present time. Of the 176 written by Burr, 131 were to men, and 45 to women; of the 90 received by him, 73 were from men, and 17 from women. Of the whole number, 317, he wrote or received fully two thirds while in England, but his Journal was much fuller and more interesting as regards the other countries, particularly Germany. The Bixby edition contains no correspondence, but the entries in the Journal count up to 300,000 words, or what would make a printed compass equivalent to three popular novels of to-day.

To dispel forever the erroneous and ignorant statements, some of them manifestly malicious, about Colonel Burr's social ostracism in Europe, it is only necessary to mention the names of those with whom he corresponded or met personally during his absence from the United States. This has never been done in a manner to reach the great reading public, and in justice to Colonel Burr, such a summary, made as brief as possible, is demanded, and is here given.

Among his European correspondents and personal friends or acquaintances were: Colonel Charles Williamson, the brother of David Williamson (afterwards Lord Balgray, in the Scotch peerage); Mrs. A. Prevost, a relative of his wife; Mr. Canning, of the British Ministry; Lord Mulgrave; Jeremy Bentham; Dr. Joseph Moore; Fuseli the painter; Mr. Mallet, the Misses Mallet, and Mme. Achaud, relatives of his wife; Governor Franklin (son of Benjamin Franklin); Lord Bridgewater (Egerton, Earl of Bridgewater); Dr. Lettsome, a cultivated English physician (consulted concerning Theodosia's illness);

George Chalmers, the author; Sir Andrew Grant; Sir Mark A. Gerard, and Captain Percival of the marines; Sir Samuel Romilly; Baron D'Arabit and sister; Dawe, the painter; General Picton; General C. Hope, of the War Office; Baron Norton; Captain Charles Smith; Baron Montalbert; Lieutenant Colonel William Prevost and wife; William Godwin, the author, former husband of Mary Wollstonecraft, but now married to the Widow Clement; Charles Lamb, the "Gentle Elia"; William and Mrs. Johnstone of Alva House, near Stirling, Scotland; Mrs. Gordon, of Craig; Mr. Alexander Young, of Edinburgh; General Alexander Hope; while at Edinburgh, Alexander McKenzie, the author, Walter Scott (afterwards Sir Walter Scott) who had just published "Marmion," Colonel Alexander Munro, the Rev. Mr. Morehead, Sir William Feltus, Lord Hopetoun, Lord Dundas, the Duchess of Gordon, Lady Jane Montague, Lord Montfort, Captain McDowall, Baron Hepburne, Sir A. McKenzie, Governor Houston, Judge Hume, Lord Webb Seymour, and Sir William Strickland.

Again in London: Mrs. M. J. Godwin; Lord Liverpool; Baron de Brinkmann; Miss Ann Williamson (daughter of Colonel Charles Williamson).

In Sweden: Captain Nordenskold, of the Swedish Navy; Professor Gahn; Baron Mancke; Baron Armfelt; M. Wennerquist, a wealthy banker; Professor Arnt; Baron Wrangle; Rev. Mr. Catteau; Baron de Morner; the Swedish Regent; Countess de Passé; Countess Bunge; Countess Lovenkaup; Mme. de Castre, a singer; Breda, the first painter of Sweden, who told him that a painted picture should always be rolled with the paint *outside*; Countess Aurore de Gyllan-

stolpe, which Burr called "a hard name for a beautiful woman"; Baron Engerstrom; Baron d'Albedy'hll; Colonel Bergenstrala; Professor Afzelius; Turnberg, the naturalist; Professor Göslin; Mr. Larsclever Husot, No. 36 *nast Räintmastarehuset vid Skepsbrouen trappur upp*. Burr says he lodged on *Malmskildnadsgatan* Street; Governor Willenstadt.

In Denmark: M. de Coningk, Counsellor of State; Professor Ramus; Professor Garnberg.

In Germany: M. Bourrienne, the French Minister; General Walderstoff; M. Lawacetz, Counsellor of State; President de Blucher; General Damasque; Mr. Jacobson, an author and advocate; Professor Ebeling; Professor Rimarius, father of Mme. Sievekin; M. de Chapeaurouge; Mr. Verwaller Luning, a wealthy mill owner, and his son Diedric, who was very friendly to Colonel Burr; Mme. de Decken and her daughter, the Baroness de Wangenheim; Mr. de Spileker, lawyer; General la Salicette; Commander General St. Simon; State Councillor Zimmermann; Baron de Schale; Professor Heeren; M. de Marten, author; Baron de Schrade; the Princess Caroline; Baroness de Stein; Baroness d'Egglustein; Baroness de Knebel, and Her Highness the Reigning Duchess, and the Duchess —, sister of the Emperor Alexander, and the Hereditary Prince, and finally, the Reigning Duke; the Countess de Peyster; Princess Marie, of Russia; Wieland, poet and author; Göethe, the great German author; another visit to Göethe, the author of "Faust"; at Erfurth, the French Governor was named De Visme — Colonel Burr's sister-in-law, half-sister to Mrs. Theodosia Prevost Burr, was named De Visme; Baron de Salish: Duke of

Gotha; the Princess Louise, afterwards mother of Emperor William of Germany — at that time in her tenth year — Burr says "Very handsome"; Baron de Tummel; Bernard de Linderau, astronomer and mathematician; L'Electrice de Hesse, *née* Princess de Dannemare; Gallati, professor of history; Baron de Falkenberg, 83, and prime minister; A bouquet of her own drawing, a "souvenir" from the Princess Louise; Baron Strick; at Eisenach — the bouquet came back from the Princess Louise, with a name and date added as requested by Colonel Burr; Baroness de Dalwigk; Baron de Beckholsheim; Baron de Goeckhausen; General Letocq; Count de Buste; Baron d'Ende and the Baroness; Baron de Wallschmitt; Count de Rode; Count of Westphalia; Prince Frederic of Hesse; General Meynier; Baron Jean Bon St. André; John Conrad de Ron, a cousin of Colonel Burr; Count de Volney, who had been Colonel Burr's guest at Richmond Hill; Dr. Schlosser, LL.D.; Mme. Vandervalten, his cousin.

At Paris, February 16, 1810: Duke de Cadore; John Vanderlyn, his protégé; Baron d'Alberg; while at the theatre Français, Burr saw the Emperor Napoleon, who came in during the third act of "The Barber of Seville," by Beaumarchais; Count Louis; General Vallance; Jerome Bonaparte, King of Westphalia; J. Burr, Canon of the Collegiate Chapter of Rheinfelden, in Germany, who claimed relationship to Colonel Burr; Baron de Humboldt; Edward Griswold, a rich American, a resident of Paris; Duke de Bassano; Duke de Rovigo; Madame de Launey, aunt of Bernardin St. Pierre. M. St. Pierre had two children, Paul and Virginia; Count Pasquier; M.

Denon, who aided Burr in obtaining a passport by bringing the matter to the attention of the Duke of Bassano.

In England again he met or corresponded with his old friends; among them Jeremy Bentham, Lord Balgray, the Godwins, and many others whose names have already been mentioned.

It would seem as though the perusal of this long list of names, including so many of rank, would put at rest forever the statements that during Burr's residence in Europe he was an outcast, and lived a life of seclusion and poverty. True, he was poor, especially during his residence in Paris and the second time in England, but he could have escaped all this had it not been for the obstacles put in his way by General Armstrong, Jonathan Russell, and Samuel McRae. Armstrong even gave orders that no messengers should receive packages which Burr wished to send to America.

During his life in Europe, Colonel Burr was an omnivorous reader; a list even of the books purchased and read by him would fill pages of this volume; he read law books in each country; scientific works, books of travel, fiction, principally in the French language, and also French comedies and tragedies. He was a frequent visitor to the theatre and opera, and on all fête days was an interested observer of foreign customs, which he graphically described in his Journal.

In each country visited, he made it a point to visit all objects of historical interest near his line of travel. This travel was done largely by post-chaise, but by water when possible, the cost being much

less. In Holland the slow-moving canal boat was the chief medium for transportation. The voyage from London to Boston, by sailing vessel, took from March 27, 1812, to May 4, or 39 days.

During his exile his thoughts were ever of his daughter and her health. He consulted the leading English physicians; he made arrangements for her to come to England for treatment. In his Journal he wrote to her: "You will wear out. No, alas! you perish joyless in those infernal swamps;" and again, "Curse those South Carolina swamps." He carried his daughter's portrait with him wherever he went, and was ever ready to show it to appreciative friends. On one journey he had the box which contained it on his lap during a ride covering two hundred miles.

Whenever he had spare money in his pocket, and just as often when he had little more than the price of his board and lodging, he would buy watches, books, and articles of dress for his daughter, and books, toys, coins, and medals for his grandson. On two occasions he had prospects of a fortune, and the greatest happiness to be secured by its possession, as he expressed it, would be his ability to buy presents for his daughter and grandson.

He, undoubtedly, had some of the *characteristics* of a spendthrift, but not the *selfish* ones. If he paid high prices for anything to be used by himself, it was because he was forced to such extravagant outlay. His personal wants were few, and his manner of living, as regards food, very simple, often abstemious.

He had many friends; those who have been named form but few of the great number mentioned in his



Journal. He was ever in motion, often making a dozen calls or visits in a day. To write in his Journal, which he considered was the same as writing to his daughter, he considered a sacred duty, and after a day of excitement he would pass the early hours of the morning communing with her.

He failed in consummating any of the plans which he had in mind when he sailed for England, and it is well that he did. No matter how pure his motives, no matter how great his sympathy for the down-trodden inhabitants of the tyranny-ridden Spanish American States of South America, anything with which he was connected would have been called *intrigue* or *treason*. Burr was a *traitor* because he intended to invade and conquer Texas, but the man who did it, years later, is immortalized, for one of the cities bears his name. Burr was a *traitor* because he contemplated the conquest of Mexico, but of the men who accomplished it, years later, one was made President of the United States and the other the commanding general of its army.

Rarely does the inventor reap the full reward due him for the labor of his head and hands; seldom does the instigator of human progress wear the crown of achievement. He is pushed aside, when his ideas become popular and therefore powerful, and others reap the reward.

Of Burr it may be truthfully said, as of many others who have lived before or since, that to him came the glory of failure, although he had endeavored well. From youth to old age, in whatever he undertook, he was indefatigable, and by none can he be deprived of "the victory of endurance born."

## CHAPTER XIV

### HER LAST VOYAGE

**B**URR has been widely criticised for saying "Law is whatever is boldly asserted and plausibly maintained." Whether the criticism is just or not, must, as Parton said, "be left to the lawyers." One of the greatest of America's lawyers has since said, in substance, that during his career he had often found it more advantageous to know the *judge* than the law. Moralists can compare the two opinions and decide which, to them, is the more obnoxious. To paraphrase Burr's definition, it may be said that history is what is stated by a recognized authority, and then repeated by others without further investigation.

It would seem as though the port from which Theodosia sailed on her last voyage, the name of the vessel, and the kind, were points that could be easily determined, and be presented in school books, histories, biographies, and newspapers with uniformity; but it is not so. Nearly all writers say that the vessel sailed from Charleston, South Carolina; the vessel's name is variously given as the *Pilot* and the *Patriot*, while the boat itself is called a packet, a pilot boat, a privateer, a schooner, or a sloop, while by many it is vaguely termed "a vessel."

There is no good reason for contrariety or vagueness. The vessel was a pilot boat that had been a

privateer; its name was "The Patriot," and the port of embarkation was Georgetown, South Carolina, and not Charleston. These points are established beyond the possibility of successful contradiction by letters written to Colonel Burr by Timothy Green and Theodosia's husband. There is unanimity as to the date of sailing, December 30, 1812.

Timothy Green was an uncle of Hon. Andrew H. Green, known as "the father of Greater New York," who was assassinated, by mistake, several years ago, at the doorway of his residence in New York City. In a letter of date March 17, 1902, the Hon. Andrew H. Green wrote: "It was Timothy Green, my uncle, who left Charleston (?) with Mrs. Alston (Theodosia Burr) and who was, as is supposed, lost at sea. The story goes that the vessel on which they sailed was captured by pirates, and they were compelled to walk the plank. This Timothy Green was the son of Dr. John Green the 1st, of Green Hill, in Worcester, Massachusetts, and a grandson of Brigadier-General Timothy Ruggles, and a direct descendant of Governor Thomas Dudley, of the Colony of Massachusetts. He left his native place in the last part of the last century, and for many years was a resident of the City of New York."

Mr. Timothy Green was a friend of Colonel Burr, and at the latter's solicitation agreed to go to South Carolina and accompany Mrs. Alston to New York. Two letters from Mr. Green to Colonel Burr establish the intended date of sailing, the kind of boat, and the port of departure.

CHARLESTON, S. C., December 7, 1812.

I arrived here from New York on the 28th ult., and on the 29th started for Columbia. Mr. Alston seemed rather hurt that you should

conceive it necessary to send a person here, as he or one of his brothers would attend Mrs. Alston to New York. I told him that you had some opinion of my medical talents; that you had learned your daughter was in a low state of health, and required unusual attention, and medical attention, on her voyage; that I had torn myself from my family to perform this service for my friend. He said that he was inclined to charter a vessel to take her on. I informed him that I should return to Charleston, where I should remain a day or two, and then proceed to Georgetown (S. C.) and wait his arrival.

GEORGETOWN, S. C., December 22, 1812.

I have engaged a passage to New York for your daughter in a pilot-boat that has been out privateering, but has come in here, and is re-fitting merely to get to New York. My only fears are that Governor Alston may think the mode of conveyance too undignified, and object to it; but Mrs. Alston is fully bent on going. You must not be surprised to see her very low, feeble, and emaciated. Her complaint is an almost incessant nervous fever. We shall sail in about eight days.

Her husband waited a fortnight, and hearing no word of his wife's arrival in New York, he sent a letter to her, and four days later he wrote her again. Before that, her fate, whatever it was, had been decided.

COLUMBIA, S. C., January 15, 1813.

Another mail, and still no letter! I hear, too, rumours of a gale off Cape Hatteras the beginning of the month! The state of my mind is dreadful. Let no man, wretched as he may be, presume to think himself beyond the reach of another blow. I shall count the hours till noon to-morrow. If I do not hear then, there will be no hope till Tuesday. To feelings like mine, what an interval! May God grant me one word from you to-morrow. Adieu. All that I have left of heart is yours. All my prayers are for your safety and well-being.

January 19, 1813.

Forebodings! wretched, heart-rending forebodings distract my mind. I may no longer have a wife; and yet my impatient restlessness addresses her a letter. To-morrow will be three weeks since our

separation, and yet not one line. Gracious God! for what am I reserved?

When Mr. Alston wrote to his wife on January 19, he also addressed a letter to Colonel Burr, being at that time at Columbia, the State capital. On January 31 he wrote to his father-in-law, from Charleston:

COLUMBIA, January 19, 1813.

To-morrow will be three weeks since, in obedience to your wishes, Theodosia left me. It is three weeks, and yet not one line from her. My mind is tortured. I wrote you on the 29th ult., the day before Theo sailed, that on the next day she would embark in the privateer *Patriot*, a pilot-boat-built schooner, commanded by Captain Overstocks, with an old New York pilot as sailing-master. The vessel had dismissed her crew, and was returning home with her guns under deck. Her reputed swiftness in sailing inspired such confidence of a voyage of not more than five or six days, that the three weeks without a letter fill me with an unhappiness — a wretchedness I can neither describe nor conquer. Gracious God! Is my wife, too, taken from me? I do not know why I write, but I feel that I am miserable.

CHARLESTON, January 31, 1813.

A call of business to this place for a few days occasioned your letter of the 20th not to be received till this morning. Not a moment is lost in replying to it. Yet wherefore? You ask of me to relieve your suspense. Alas! It was to you I looked for similar relief. I have written you twice since my letter of December 29th. I can add nothing to the information then given. I parted with our Theo near the bar about noon on Thursday, the last of December. The wind was moderate and fair. She was in the pilot-boat-built schooner *Patriot*, Captain Overstocks, with an experienced New York pilot, Coon, as sailing-master. This vessel, the same which had been sent by government last summer in pursuit of Commodore Rodger's squadron, had been selected as one which, from her reputed excellence and swiftness in sailing, would ensure a passage of not more than five or six days. From that moment I have heard nothing of the schooner nor my wife. I have been the prey of feelings which you only can imagine. When I turned from the grave of my boy, I deemed myself

no longer vulnerable. Misfortune had no more a blow for me. I was wrong. It is true I no longer feel; I never shall feel as I was wont; but I have been taught that there was still one being in whom I was inexpressibly interested. I have in vain endeavored to build upon the hope of long passage. Thirty days are decisive. My wife is *either captured or lost*. What a destiny is mine! And I live under it, engage in business, appear to the world as though all was tranquil, easy. 'Tis so, but it cannot endure. A short time since and the idea of capture would have been the source of painful, terrible apprehension; it now furnishes me the only ray of comfort, or rather of hope, that I have. Each mail is anticipated with impatient, yet fearful and appalling anxiety. Should you hear aught relative to the object of this, our common solicitude, do not, I pray, forget me.

Nearly a month passed by; tidings had been sought from Bermuda and Nassau, but no reassuring words had come. In New York the anxious father stood upon the Battery, his eyes fixed upon the wide expanse of water, hoping against hope that each fresh sail that bore in sight belonged to the little craft that bore the beloved of his life. Another heart, in the South land, was near to breaking, and the one in whose breast it was beating turned for sympathy and condolence to the only one who could appreciate his immeasurable loss. There is no more pathetic letter in the language, none fuller of the expression of intense grief, than the husband's of February 25, to the equally disconsolate father:

February 25, 1813.

Your letter of the 10th, my friend, is received. This assurance of my fate was not wanting. Authentic accounts from Bermuda and Nassau, as late as January 30, connected with your letter from New York of the 28th, had already forced upon me the dreadful conviction that we had no more hope. Without this victim, too, the desolation would not have been complete. My boy — my wife — gone, both! This, then, is the end of all the hopes we had formed. You may well

observe that you feel severed from the human race. She was the last tie that bound us to the species. What have we left? In surviving the 30th of June (the day on which his son died) I thought I could meet all other afflictions with ease, yet I have staggered under this in a manner that I am glad had not a witness. Your letter of January 28 was not received till February 9. The Oaks, for some months visited only at intervals, when the feelings the world thought gone by were not to be controlled, was the asylum I sought. It was there, in the chamber of my wife, where everything was disposed as usual; with the clothes, the books, the playthings of my boy around me, that I sustained this second shock, doubled in a manner that I could not account for. My son seemed to have been reanimated, to have been restored to me, and to have just perished again with his mother. It was the loss of both pressing upon me at the same moment.

Should it be my misfortune to live a century, the 30th of June and the 10th of February are so impressed upon my mind that they will always seem to have just passed. I visited the grave of my boy. The little plans we had all three formed rushed upon my memory. Where now was the boy? The mother I cherished with so much pride? I felt like the very spirit of desolation. If it had not been for a kind of stupefaction and confusion of mind which followed, God knows how I should have borne it. Oh, my friend, if there be such a thing as the sublime of misery, it is for us that it has been reserved.

You are the only person in the world with whom I can commune on this subject; for you are the only person whose feelings can have any community with mine. You knew those we loved. With you, therefore, it will be no weakness to feel their loss. Here, none know them; none valued them as they deserved. The talents of my boy, his rare elevation of character, his already extensive reputation for so early an age, made his death regretted by the pride of my family; but though certain of the loss of my not less admirable wife, they seem to consider it like the loss of an ordinary woman. Alas! they knew nothing of my heart. They never have known anything of it. After all, he is a poor actor who cannot sustain his little hour upon the stage, be his part what it may. But the man who has been deemed worthy of the heart of *Theodora Burr*, and who has felt what it was to be blessed with such a woman's, will never forget his elevation.

The correspondence between father-in-law and son

was kept up during the summer of 1813, but no word of cheer came to gladden their hearts. The dread suspense was harder to bear than would have been the saddening truth. In October, Colonel Burr wrote to Mr. Alston, concerning his personal affairs, such a communication evidently having been requested:

NEW YORK, October 16, 1815.

I have found it so difficult to answer that part of your letter which regards myself and my concerns, that it has been deferred though often in my mind. At some other time I may give you, in detail, a sketch of the sad period which has elapsed since my return. For the present it will suffice to say that my business affords me a decent support. If I had not been interrupted in the career which I began, I should, before this, have paid all my debts and been at ease.

My old creditors (principally the holders of the Mexican debts) came upon me last winter with vindictive fury. I was held to bail in large sums, and saw no probability of keeping out of prison for six months. This danger is still menacing, but not quite so imminent. I shall neither borrow nor receive from anyone, not even from you. I have determined not to begin to pay unless I see a prospect of paying all.

Colonel Burr, although not actively engaged in politics, took a great interest in them, not as regarded any possible preferment for himself, but with the hope that his son-in-law, who had been Governor of South Carolina from 1812 to 1814, would become a statesman of national calibre. Burr was naturally opposed to the continuance in power of the Virginia "dynasty," and he suggested that his son-in-law should bring forward the name of General Jackson and espouse his candidacy.

NEW YORK, November 20, 1815.

A congressional caucus will, in the course of the ensuing month, nominate James Monroe for President of the United States, and will call on all good republicans to support the nomination.



Whether we consider the measure itself, the character and talents of the man, or the state whence he comes, this nomination is equally exceptionable and odious.

I have often heard your opinion of these congressional nominations. They are hostile to all freedom and independence of suffrage. A certain junto of actual factitious Virginians, having had possession of the government for twenty-four years, consider the United States as their property, and, by bawling "Support the Administration," have so long succeeded in duping the republican public. One of their principal arts, and which has been systematically taught by Jefferson, is that of promoting state dissensions, not between republican and federal — that would do them no good — but schisms in the republican party. By looking round you will see how the attention of leading men in the different states has thus been turned from general and *state* politics. Let not this disgraceful domination continue.

Independently of the manner of the nomination and the location of the candidate, the man himself is one of the most improper and incompetent that could be selected. Naturally dull and stupid; extremely illiterate; indecisive to a degree that would be incredible to one who did not know him; pusillanimous, and, of course, hypocritical; has no opinion on any subject, and will be always under the government of the worst men; pretends, as I am told, to some knowledge of military matters, but never commanded a platoon, nor was ever fit to command one. "*He served in the Revolutionary War!*" — that is, he acted a short time as aide-de-camp to Lord Stirling, who was regularly. . . . Monroe's whole duty was to fill his lordship's tankard, and hear, with indications of admiration, his lordship's long stories about himself. Such is Monroe's military experience. I was with my regiment in the same division at the time. As a lawyer, Monroe was far below mediocrity. He never rose to the honour of trying a cause of the value of a hundred pounds. This is a character exactly suited to the views of the Virginia junto.

To this junto you have twice sacrificed yourself, and what have you got by it? Their hatred and abhorrence. Did you ever know them to countenance a man of talents and independence? Never — nor ever will.

It is time that you manifested that you had some individual character; some opinion of your own; some influence to support that opinion.

Make them fear you, and they will be at your feet. Thus far they have reason to believe that you fear them.

The moment is extremely auspicious for breaking down this degrading system. The best citizens of our country acknowledge the feebleness of our administration. They acknowledge that offices are bestowed merely to preserve power, and without the smallest regard to fitness. If, then, there be a man in the United States of firmness and decision, and having standing enough to afford even a hope of success, it is your duty to hold him up to public view; that man is *Andrew Jackson*. Nothing is wanting but a respectable nomination, made before the proclamation of the Virginia caucus, and *Jackson's* success is inevitable.

If this project should accord with your views, I could wish to see you prominent in the execution of it. It must be known to be your work. Whether a formal and open nomination should now be made, or whether you should for the present content yourself with barely denouncing, by a joint resolution of both houses of your legislature, congressional caucuses and nominations, you only can judge. One consideration inclines me to hesitate about the policy of a present nomination. It is this — that Jackson ought first to be admonished to be passive: for, the moment he shall be announced as a candidate, he will be assailed by the Virginia junto with menaces, and with insidious promises of boons and favours. *There is danger that Jackson might be wrought upon by such practices.* If an open nomination be made, an express should be instantly sent to him.

This suggestion has not arisen from any exclusive attachment to Jackson. The object is to break down this vile combination which rules and degrades the United States. If you should think that any other man could be held up with better prospect of success, name that man. I know of no such. But the business must be accomplished, and on this occasion, and by you. So long as the present system prevails, you will be struggling against wind and tide to preserve a precarious influence. You will never be forgiven for the crime of having talents and independence.

Exhibit yourself then and emerge from this state of nullity. You owe it to yourself, you owe it to me, you owe it to your country, you owe it to the memory of the dead.

I have talked of this matter to your late secretary, but he has not seen this letter.

A. BURR.

Your secretary was to have delivered this personally, but has changed his course on hearing that Jackson is on his way to Washington. If you should have any confidential friend among the members of Congress from your state, charge him to caution Jackson against the perfidious caresses with which he will be overwhelmed at Washington.

A. B.

Another communication, on the same subject, was sent to Governor Alston about a month later.

NEW YORK, December 11, 1815.

A copy of the preceding went under cover to Dr. Wragg. Since that date things are wonderfully advanced, as your secretary will write or tell you. These will require a written message (letter) from yourself and others (or yourself alone, but three names would look more formal), advising Jackson what is doing; that communications have been had with the Northern States, requiring him only to be passive, and asking from him a list of persons in the Western states to whom you may address your letters.

A. BURR.

But Joseph Alston was not destined to figure in national politics. His heart was broken by the loss of his son and wife. His burden was not of the kind that could be lifted by engaging in a political contest. His ambition was gone. He had no interest in the future so far as the world was concerned. He had lost what had made his life happy; his only thoughts were of them; his only wish to go to them. His reply to Colonel Burr's letter, which was so full of incentive to action, shows the broken-spirited man — sick in both mind and body.

CHARLESTON, February 16, 1816.

Your letter of the 20th of November, intrusted to Mr. Philips, was received through the post office about the middle of last month. It was, of course, too late, had circumstances been ever so favourable, to be acted upon in the manner proposed. Had it even been received,

however, in due season, it would have found me utterly incapable of exertion. On my way to Columbia, in November, I had another severe attack of illness, which rendered absolutely impracticable either the immediate prosecution of my journey or my attendance during the session of the legislature. As soon as I was able to bear the motion of a carriage, I was brought by short stages to this place, where I have been confined ever since. Yesterday was the first time for two months that I have been out of the house. So much for the miserable remnant of myself.

With regard to the subject of your letter of the 20th of November, I fully coincide with you in sentiment; but the spirit, the energy, the health necessary to give practical effect to sentiment, are all gone. I feel too much alone, too entirely unconnected with the world, to take much interest in anything. Yet without the smallest solicitude about the result, I shall certainly not fail to discharge my public duty, whenever the opportunity occurs, by giving a very strong and frank expression of my opinion on the subject suggested.

Vanderlyn, I perceive from the papers, has returned to New York. Nothing, I trust, has prevented his bringing back the portrait (the portrait of Theodosia) you left with him. Let me again entreat you to use your influence with him in procuring me a good copy. I received some days since, through the kindness of Mr. John B. Prevost, a miniature, which appears to have been taken from Vanderlyn's portrait. The execution is good, but in expression it is by no means equal to the portrait. There was a small portrait of Nathalie which you took with you, of which, if Vanderlyn embraces that kind of painting in his present plan, I should be glad also to obtain of him a copy. The original picture, I think, was the best portrait I ever saw.

Yours affectionately,

JOSEPH ALSTON.

The double burden became too heavy to bear; on September 10, 1816, Theodosia's husband died. The news of his death was communicated to Colonel Burr by the Governor's brother.

ROSEHILL, NEAR GEORGETOWN, October 4, 1816.

Sir:

It was enjoined on me, and my brother, John A. Alston, verbally, by our late brother Joseph Alston, to send a certain trunk to you,

which he never had the courage to open, containing, as he said, some things that belonged to your daughter Theodosia; and to send a certain collection of other articles (of dress, I believe) that had also been hers, to the eldest daughter of Mr. J. B. Prevost. Pray point out the way, sir, in which our trust is to be executed.

In his will, of which a copy will be sent you if desired, my brother has given all demands up to you that he had against you.

Very respectfully,

WILLIAM A. ALSTON.

P. S. These are alone the words relating to you in the will: "To my father-in-law, Aaron Burr, I give, devise, and bequeath all demands I may have against him, whether by judgment or otherwise."

In a previous chapter it was stated that none of the State papers of Governor Alston were now in existence, or that they could not be found. The text of two of them has, fortunately, come into the possession of the writer. They appeared originally in the Charleston, S. C., Courier, but were reprinted in the United States Gazette of September 18, 1813.

*(From the Charleston Courier)*

#### GENERAL ORDERS

The late general orders of his excellency, governor Alston, having excited an unusual degree of interest, we have procured a copy of them for publication. The first order, dated on the 4th inst., directed the assembling of a court martial, for the trial of certain of our fellow citizens, under the rules and articles of war, as set forth in the opinion of his honour judge Bay. The last appears to have been issued in consequence of the decision of the honourable judge. We give them to our readers without comment.

#### GENERAL ORDERS

HEADQUARTERS, CHARLESTON, Aug. 4, 1813.

The commander-in-chief has learned with surprise and deep concern, that several of the city corps, called into actual service, by general orders of the 28th May last, have refused to perform the duty

required of them. With surprise because the order for strengthening the magazine guard, a measure so intimately and immediately connected with the safety of Charleston, was predicted not only upon his own conviction of its being necessary, but upon the strong and earnest petition of the citizens themselves: with concern because while this unsoldierlike shrinking from a light and trivial service affords a wretched hope of better conduct on more arduous occasions, it holds out an example of insubordination so fatal to the safety of the state, as to justify the last degree of severity in suppressing it. Could the commander-in-chief be persuaded that the late disobedience of the corps alluded to, had really resulted from a spirit of dissatisfaction or mutiny, no consideration would prevent a recurrence to the proper measures for the punishment of every individual implicated. The means of punishment are within his reach. A call upon any militia man places him in actual service — actual service subjects him to the rules and articles of war, under which disobedience of orders may be punished, at the discretion of a court martial, even by death; and the commander-in-chief flatters himself there will never be wanting officers firm and prudent enough to inflict that punishment where it shall be merited. Enlightened freemen, who know how to value the liberty they enjoy in a state of peace, will know how essential to the preservation of those liberties are the restrictions imposed by a state of war. But the commander-in-chief will not dishonour any part of the militia of Charleston by suspecting them to be deficient either in patriotism or the qualities which constitute good soldiers. He will not believe that, when properly called upon, any service to which they have been made liable by representatives of their own choice, will be refused. A transition from the habits of peace to the habits of war, is a little difficult and he is convinced that, with the best intentions, they have been deluded into the offence of disobedience of orders, by designing, mischievous men, who have industriously circulated among them the grossest misconstructions of the militia laws, and by others, weak and credulous, who have been made to believe that there exists no power to exact their services. The commander-in-chief has moreover strong reason to believe that these misconstructions of the law have derived additional strength from the apparent impunity extended to that part of the militia, with whom the late shameful disobedience of orders commenced. But that courts martial were not ordered instantly upon those so first offending, is attributable

solely to the neglect of the officer, upon whom the duty was devolved in not making a prompt report of the case to headquarters. The procedure will be forthwith corrected.

Impressed with these sentiments, persuaded that the corps reported as guilty of disobedience of orders, have been actuated, not by any spirit of dissatisfaction or mutiny, but merely by the erroneous constructions of law circulated among them, and that they have been influenced, especially, by the unfortunate delay in bringing the first offenders to trial, the commander-in-chief deems it sufficient to subject to punishment, which may be prescribed by a court martial. those of the militia by whom was set the example of disobedience. It is therefore ordered that Brigadier General Read take immediate measures to have brought up for trial before a General Court Martial, which will assemble at the Magazine on Charleston Neck, at 10 o'clock A.M. on Monday next, the 9th inst., immediately after the said Court shall have gone through with the trial of those of the Militia charged with Disobedience of orders in not joining the late detachment under Major Howard, the following persons, viz:

(Here follow the names of forty citizens, Members of the Ancient Battalion of Artillery.)

Brig. Gen. Read is further ordered immediately to have arrested the officer of the extra magazine guard, put on duty on the 18th July, and the officer who commanded the extra guard, put on duty on the 21st July, both charged with deserting their posts, and to have them for trial before the Court Martial above mentioned.

The Brig. Gen. will likewise immediately take measures to have brought up for trial before the same court, those privates of the Republican Artillery Company, put on duty at the magazine on 23th July, and charged with deserting their posts.

Having so much to censure in the Charleston Regiments of the 7th Brigade, it is peculiarly gratifying to the commander-in-chief that the same Regiments furnish some subjects of applause and recommendation. In consequence of the refusal of the guard ordered out on the 24th July to march, the following officers and privates hastened to the Magazine, as volunteers, viz.:

(Here are inserted the names of certain officers and privates who volunteered their services at the Magazine Guard.)

To his brother officers and soldiers who thus voluntarily stepped forth to redeem the honour of the militia, the commander-in-chief

takes pleasure in offering his warmest thanks and approbation. It is on such men the hopes of South Carolina will rest in the hour of trial. The troops who refused on that occasion, their services to their country, must be strangely constituted, if, when they beheld their officers marching in the ranks, the sight did not rouse sensations of shame to which any fatigues, any privations, any dangers would have been preferable. The commander in chief mentions likewise with great satisfaction the good conduct of Lieutenant Duke, commanding the extra guard on the 25th July, and the privates from the Federalist Artillery, and though they were not relieved for a considerable time beyond the regular hour, remained at their posts with the seal and fidelity of patriotick soldiers. He cannot either omit to notice the alacrity and readiness with which the "United Blues" and the "Independent Greens" have entered upon the second tour of duty so prematurely devolved upon them by the refusal of other corps to share it.

In ordering a Court Martial upon the officers and privates herein designated, the commander-in-chief has discharged a duty painful to his private feelings, when he recollects to how severe a punishment those persons have made themselves liable; mortifying to him as an officer, when he recollects how much misconduct like theirs is calculated to reflect upon the character of the militia. He sincerely hopes there will occur no future necessity for a similar measure. Engaged in a war of which four-fifths of the citizens of this state have repeatedly, collectively and individually, expressed their decided approbation; in actual hostility with an enemy whose enormities are sufficient to kindle enthusiasm in the heart of apathy itself, combating not for doubtful rights, but for everything dear to freemen, it would be a paradox indeed, if the coercion of law were necessary to stimulate exertion.

In a government where all are equal, where the officer most elevated in rank is amenable, in common with the subaltern, to the laws, there can be little danger of abuses. The powers delegated by the people to their servants are judiciously so limited that all the energies of the constituted authorities are necessary to support a state of war. The commander-in-chief therefore calls upon his brother soldiers to regard with suspicion the man who shall seek to repress these energies and weaken the hands to which have been committed the defence and protection of the state. He calls upon their manly feelings and pa-



triotism to frown with indignation upon those who, under the pretence of expounding the militia laws, are insidiously hazarding the safety of the country by exciting murmurs and discontent. The first duty of an officer and soldier is to obey — if the laws be violated in the person of either, his country has provided the remedy.

That no militia man may be hereafter taken by surprise, the commander-in-chief orders it to be made known that every disobedience of an order from headquarters, requiring the service either of officer or private, will subject the person guilty of it to an immediate trial by court martial, under the rules and articles of war.

The brigade major and inspector of the seventh brigade is ordered to furnish the judge advocate general with the names of all the persons ordered to be tried, and the names of the necessary witnesses. He will likewise attend and organize the court martial herein directed.

The judge advocate general will forthwith prepare charges in proper form, and issue the necessary precepts. He will also attend the court martial to be convened at the magazine on the 9th inst.

Brigadier general Read will forthwith extend copies of this general order to the captains of the 28th and 29th regt. — the regt. of artillery, and the regt. of cavalry, with orders that it be read at the head of every company.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

### GENERAL ORDERS

HEADQUARTERS, CHARLESTON, Aug. 23, 1813.

The construction given to the militia law of 1794, by the commander-in-chief, by the judge advocate general, and by the attorney general, it seems was wrong. The military system ordained by the legislature for the regulation and good government of the troops, and on which the state has hitherto delusively relied for protection and safety, has been solemnly decided to be inoperative and nugatory; a mere rope of sand. The laws which extend to every citizen protection, impose no obligation of service in return. The executive has a right to order a militiaman to take the field, but the militiaman has a right to stay at home. Should any momentary impulse even induce the militia to embody, there exists not the slightest authority to restrain irregularity, or to punish misconduct, however fatal in its consequences. Such has been the judicial decision.

Massachusetts and Connecticut while from a spirit of hostility to

the war and the administration, they refuse the aid of their militia to the general government, do not scruple at least to avail themselves of their militia in defending their own shores. South Carolina, less solicitous about her safety, while she is ready to lend her militia to the general government, or to a sister state, and is perfectly willing, for the purpose of rendering them efficient, that in either service they shall be subjected to the rules and articles of war, seems to exact her services in her own defence by the smallest penalty — deems the slightest restraint upon them when in camp, incompatible with the liberty of the citizen. Thus the militia man ordered into the field, instead of being before the enemy, is before the judge on a writ of *habeas corpus*. While the enemy are in sight of the city, at the very moment the soil is actually invaded, and the citizens of an adjoining parish plundered of their property, the militia of Charleston are thronging the Court House, waiting in fearful solicitude, a decision upon the question whether the services of a militia man can be exacted or not.

Well, the question has been decided. The services of a militia man cannot be exacted, however imperious the emergency. He who refused to share the fate of his comrades at Thermopylæ, lived only to expiate his shame by a glorious death on a subsequent occasion. The example, it is hoped, will not be lost. The commander-in-chief receives the decision of the court with the submission due to the constituted tribunals of a free state. Subordination of the military to the civil authority is characteristic of the constitution. It is a characteristic that he would be the last to impair. While he will lose no time in calling upon the wisdom of the legislature to correct the state of anarchy into which the militia have been thrown by the late decision, he hastens in the meanwhile to conform to that decision. The general court martial, of which lieut. col. Youngblood is president, is hereby dissolved, and the general order of the 4th inst. countermanded.

The general order issued at the request of the citizens of Charleston, for an extra guard at the magazine, is hereby countermanded.

The general order directing a nightly guard to be furnished by the alarm corps at the new battery is likewise countermanded.

The general order directing a detachment from the 5th brigade is countermanded.

Lieutenant Col. Youngblood will forthwith discharge the attachment under his command. The arms, equipments, &c. furnished

for the particular service in which they have been engaged, to be deposited in the most contiguous or convenient arsenal. In ordering this detachment to be discharged, the commander-in-chief would be unjust to distinguished merit, if he did not express his obligations to the zeal, the patriotism, the talents, and truly military spirit of lieutenant-col. Youngblood. When it is added that during a service of nearly three months there has not been occasion for a single court martial, that not a murmur has been heard, not one instance of misconduct exhibited, it will readily be perceived how much indeed every officer and private in the detachment is entitled to the commendation of his country.

In the approbation bestowed upon the officers designated in the following extract from the report of lieutenant-col. Youngblood, the commander-in-chief cordially and with great pleasure unites, "The men have conducted themselves with subordination; they are ambitious and patriotic; and at most of the posts, tolerable proficient in military discipline. It would be doing an injustice to the officers at Beaufort, viz. Capt. Barnwell, Lieutenant Lawton, and Ensign Gillison, not to mention them particularly to your excellency. The discipline of their company cannot be exceeded by any troops who have been in service so short a time. Capt. Meggett and Lieutenants Bailey and Patrick are also excellent officers and entitled to my warmest approbation."

The commander-in-chief avails himself of this opportunity likewise to tender his thanks to his venerable fellow citizens composing the alarm corps for their cheerful and soldierlike performance of the duty assigned them. They have afforded honourable proof — better than a thousand declamatory professions — that the spirit which carried them in triumph through the struggle of '76, still animates them; they have offered an example to their sons, which ought to have had its weight.

All officers having command on the seacoast are earnestly required to be vigilant and alert, and in the event of a landing by the enemy, to lose no time in conforming to the provisions of the act of '94, in case of alarm. With the enemy before them, a regard to self preservation may induce on the part of the militia, that submission to orders and military discipline which, from false notions of liberty, is now refused.

When he recollects the wanton conflagrations, the brutal licentiousness, the worse than Indian atrocities, wreaked by the enemy upon the sister states of Maryland and Virginia, the commander-in-chief

feels too much solicitude for South Carolina, not to deprecate most fervently the fatal effects which may result from the present derangement, or rather annihilation, of the military system. He deprecates the pernicious purposes to which the late decision may be perverted by those opposed, whether from passion or principle, to the war and to the persons charged with its conduct. He deprecates, above all, the more ruinous and baneful influence the present state of anarchy is calculated to produce upon the publick sentiment in a political way. The want of energy, the imbecility, attributed to republican governments — their alleged incapacity to sustain the shock of war, or to support themselves in difficulties — have been the insidious and constant arguments of the enemies of liberty in favour of monarchy. To these arguments, everything which tends to produce embarrassment and confusion, everything which contributes to defeat and failure in the present contest, must give new and increased weight. But the commander-in-chief relies not only upon the spirit but upon the good sense of his countrymen. The present prospect is gloomy. But he trusts the events will furnish neither argument nor example to any future innovator upon the happy and republican constitution of South Carolina.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

The bodies of Governor Alston and his son repose in the family burying-ground at the "Oaks" on Waccamaw, All Saints Parish, Georgetown County, South Carolina. The tombstone bears the following inscription:

## THEODOSIA

· Sacred to the memory  
of  
JOSEPH and THEODOSIA BURR ALSTON  
and of their son  
AARON BURR ALSTON.  
This last died June, 1812, at the age  
of ten years  
And his remains are interred here.  
The disconsolate mother perished  
A few months after at sea  
And on the 10th of September, 1816, died the father,  
When little over 37 years of age,  
Whose remains rest here with the son's.  
The loss of this citizen was no common one  
to the State.  
To its service he devoted himself from  
his early years.  
On the floors of its Legislature he was  
Distinguished for his extensive information  
and his transcendent eloquence.  
In the chair of the House of Representatives  
For his important and correct decisions.  
And everywhere he was distinguished  
for his zealous attachment to his  
Republican principles.  
In the capacity of Chief Magistrate  
When both the honours and the responsibility  
of the trust were heightened by the difficulties  
and the war of 1812  
He, by his indomitable activity and his  
Salutary measures, earned new titles  
to the respect and the gratitude of his fellow citizens.  
This great man was also a good one.  
He met his death with the same fortitude  
As his Ancestor, from whom he derived  
His name and this estate,  
And which is to be found only in the good,  
Hoping to regain those whose  
Loss had left in his heart an  
Aching void that nothing  
on earth could fill.

## CHAPTER XV

### HER SUPPOSED FATE

**T**HE domain of conjecture is very wide, and its limits have surely been reached since the disappearance of the *Patriot*, her passengers and crew. It is our present purpose to take up these conjectures, or theories, or alleged facts (the latter proven to those who present them) in chronological order, and thus show the crystallizing of public opinion as regards the supposed fate of Theodosia.

The first life of Colonel Burr was written by Samuel L. Knapp. At the time of its publication the subject of the volume was still living, but he died in the following year. Referring to Theodosia's death, Knapp says (85):

"On his return to this country, after having been more than five (only four) years in Europe, his daughter embarked from Charleston (Georgetown) to make him a visit in New York. She sailed in a privateer-built vessel, and which was never afterward heard of. For a long time the most agonizing fears were entertained that the vessel had been taken by pirates. They swarmed at that time upon the Southern coast of our country, and all about the West Indies; but after months of awful suspense, he had, heaven forgive the expression, the happiness to think she had been buried in the 'fathomless abyss.'

On going to Europe in 1807 (1808) Colonel Burr had left his most valuable papers with his daughter, but these were lost with her. This was truly a loss to the historian, as he (Burr) had been careful in filing documents that contained the facts connected with every event of his life."

Mr. Knapp does not mention the source of the "pirate story." It first appeared in print, probably, in an Alabama paper (86). This article was brought to the attention of the public in a communication from William L. Stone, of Mount Vernon, New York, to the New York Sun of August 27, 1904.

In to-day's Sun, under "Questions and Answers," in reply to a correspondent asking "What was the true story of the disappearance of Theodosia, daughter of Aaron Burr, having been captured by pirates," the editor, usually correct, states that there was "no foundation" for the pirate story. Allow me, however, to say that, on the contrary, there is considerable foundation for it, and if you will permit me, I will state my reasons for the above opinion. The *Mobile Register*, of May 23, 1833, said:

The fate of Mrs. Alston, the accomplished lady of Governor Alston of South Carolina, and daughter of Aaron Burr, has been shrouded in mystery for more than twenty years. Occasionally, indeed, some gleam of light has been thrown around her melancholy end, and the belief is that she fell a victim to piratical atrocity. Some three years ago it was currently reported that a man residing in one of the interior counties of this State made some disclosures on his deathbed which went to confirm the confession previously made by a culprit on the gallows, that the vessel in which Mrs. Alston sailed was scuttled for the sake of her plate and effects. The following article, which we copy from the *Alabama Journal*, goes to throw some additional light on the subject. The facts mentioned in it are new to us, and will be to most of our readers.

#### CONFESSION OF A PIRATE

The public no doubt remembers the story of the daughter of Aaron Burr, who was the wife of Governor Alston of South Carolina. On

the return of her father from Europe, about the year 1812, she embarked from Charleston, on a visit to him at New York, on board a privateer-built vessel, and was never heard of afterward. It seems that her friends at first thought the vessel had fallen into the hands of pirates, and afterwards concluded that it was wrecked and lost. It appears from the statement of a respectable merchant of Mobile that a man died in that city recently, who confessed on his dying bed that he had been a pirate and helped to destroy the vessel, and all the crew and passengers, on which Mrs. Alston had embarked for New York. He declared, says this gentleman (who is well known to us) that after the men were all killed there was an unwillingness on the part of every pirate to take the life of Mrs. Alston, who had not resisted them or fought them, and therefore they drew lots who should perform the deed, as it had to be done.

The lot fell on this pirate who declares that he effected his object by laying a plank along the edge of the ship and made Mrs. Alston walk on the plank till it tilted over with her. The dying pirate (says our informant) requested his physician to make this story public; but his surviving family will not permit that the name of the deceased should be known.

The above tale was repeated over and over by the merchant before mentioned in the presence of a number of gentlemen whose names we are prepared to give. On being asked if the physician was a man of veracity, he replied that there was no man more so in Mobile. The merchant was warned that his story would get into the newspapers, to which he made no objection.

My father, the late Col. William L. Stone, visited in the Tombs a pirate known as "Babe," and endeavored to procure from him a statement that he was the one who captured the schooner in which Mrs. Alston had taken passage. While the pirate refused to make any statement to my father either pro or con regarding it, the very fact that my father endeavored to get from him a confession showed (very strongly) what the general opinion was at that time. My father was a very intimate friend of Aaron Burr — hence his efforts to ascertain the truth. Theodosia was, indeed, a most lovely and cultivated woman, as three or four autograph letters from her to her father (in my possession) show. These letters were given to my father by Burr.

WILLIAM L. STONE.



Parton declares Colonel Burr's opinion was that the vessel was lost at sea (87). "For months the agonized father could not go upon the Battery, then the chief promenade of the City of New York, without looking wistfully down toward the Narrows, with a secret, pining hope that even yet the missing vessel might appear. It was long before he could relinquish the idea that some outward bound ship might have rescued the passengers, and carried them away to a distant port, whence soon the noble Heart would return to bless her father's life. By-the-by, some idle tales were started in the newspapers that the *Patriot* had been captured by pirates, and all on board murdered except Theodosia, who was carried on shore a captive. 'No, no,' said Burr to a friend who mentioned the groundless rumor, 'she is indeed dead. She perished in the miserable little pilot-boat in which she left Charleston (Georgetown). Were she alive, all the prisons in the world could not keep her from her father. When I realized the truth of her death, the world became a blank to me, and life had then lost all its value.'"

In 1872 a novel was published entitled "Fernando de Lemos," both "truth and fiction," written by Charles Gayarré, the author of "The History of Louisiana" and other well-known works. Chapter XXVIII is headed "Dominique You, the Pirate"; Chapter XXIX, "The Fate of the Daughter of Aaron Burr Revealed." This, so far as careful research shows, is the first appearance of Theodosia in fiction (88).

The work is out of print and difficult to obtain. A search for several years failed to find a copy, until

Colonel Armand Hawkins, of New Orleans, the owner of one, kindly consented to spare it from his private library, and thus enabled the presentation of the quotations which follow.

A Dr. Rhineberg was called to attend the pirate, who was sick, in fact in a dying condition. A few brief selections are made from the Doctor's story, in order to bring the pirate's character forcibly before the reader.

"Dominique You was his name. Wrapped up in a morning gown, he was reclining in a large arm-chair with his slippered feet resting on a stool covered with a tiger's skin. . . . My new patient had been originally a man of powerful make, but he was now attenuated and feeble. . . . His physiognomy was remarkable and not easily to be forgotten. It was massive and of the leonine style. It looked as if the monarch of the forest had assumed the human form, but still retained something of his primitive type. A thick, bushy hair, falling like a shaggy mane over his shoulders, added to the effect. His voice was deep-toned and sounded like a subdued roar, as it came out of the large cavities of his broad chest."

The pirate asked the Doctor to diagnose his case, which was done. The verdict was: "You are suffering from an ossification of one of the valves of the heart. There remains nothing to do but to try to alleviate your sufferings." The pirate asked: "How many days have I to live?" The Doctor replied: "Very few."

The pirate from day to day told the story of his life to the Doctor. "What is a crime?" he asked.

The Doctor answered: "Any wicked or atrocious act, I suppose, which is a grave violation of a human or a divine law." "Setting aside divine law," said the pirate, "for I always give a wide birth to religious discussions, I am, then, a criminal, according to your definition, for I certainly have violated human laws even to the shedding of blood, and yet, although I believe in God and in the immortality of the soul, I have no remorse. I assure you I am as calm and easy as if I did not stand guilty in the sight of man."

At the close of the story of his life, You said: "On the 3d of January, 1813, there occurred an event which, some years afterward, had consequences which I have ever since bitterly regretted, although I have become nothing but a solid mass of stone, or bone; and this ossification of the heart, Doctor, of which I die, is nothing, perhaps, but the ultimate result of the gradual transformation I have undergone."

"We were," continued You, "in the latitude of Cape Hatteras on the coast of North Carolina, when we met a small schooner named the *Patriot*, which had been dismantled by a late storm, and which was bound from Charleston, South Carolina, to New York. She was a vessel famous for her sailing qualities. After many successful privateering cruises against the English, she was going home loaded with rich spoils, and with her guns stowed below — which circumstance made her incapable of defence. We boarded her. She was commanded by an experienced captain, and had for sailing master an old New York pilot noted for his skill and courage.

“Such men could not be allowed to live to tell tales, and perhaps avenge their mishap at our hands, even if sparing them had not been contrary to the regulations of our association. They were slaughtered and thrown overboard with the rest of the crew. After this execution my men rushed down below and brought up to the deck a woman of surpassing beauty, deadly pale, but showing no other signs of terror. She looked at us with a sort of serene haughtiness, which was truly wonderful. She made such an impression on me, that I can almost fancy her now standing in this chamber precisely as she stood on that deck.

“‘Who are you?’ I said to her.

“‘Theodosia Burr, the daughter of Aaron Burr, ex-vice-president of the United States, and wife of Joseph Alston, governor of South Carolina.’

“‘A grand conquest,’ exclaimed one of my men, ‘and we shall have a jolly time with her.’ And he advanced toward her, followed by the rest of the crew. She stepped back with an offended look of queenly dignity. I planted myself in front of her.

“‘Back, my men’ I shouted, ‘back at the peril of your lives. Don’t you know better? Don’t you know that I sanction death, but no outrages of the kind you contemplate. Death to prisoners is a necessity of the war we wage. Every vessel we take is to be scuttled, and every soul on board must perish. This is our covenant. In that we are justified on the principle of self-defence. But what you intend doing would be, not only a mean and cowardly act, but also an atrocious crime, because useless for our protection and not an indispensable sacrifice which

we must make to it. Death is in the bond which I signed, but not rape. Back, then, back!"

"They murmured and seemed to hesitate. I put my hand on one of the pistols which I had in my belt, and they slowly and sullenly retired to their quarters, leaving me alone with the lady.

"'Sir,' she said, 'I thank you; you have more than saved my life.'

"'I regret, madam, that I cannot do more; that life is forfeited.'

"'It is well. When must it be?'

"'Now.'

"'I am ready; the sooner done the better for me and for yourself, for I am in your way, and a source of peril to you.'

"I had the plank laid out. She stepped on it and descended into the sea with graceful composure, as if she had been alighting from a carriage. She sank, and rising again, she, with an indescribable smile of angelic sweetness, waved her hand to me as if she meant to say: Farewell, and thanks again; and then sank forever. By the living God! She must have been a splendid creature."

"Wretch!" the Doctor exclaimed in a burst of indignation. "How dare your lips thus profane the name of God! And how dare you confess to me such horrors! Were you not dying, I would have you arrested and hung!"

"Precisely, Doctor, precisely; but I am dying. Pray, sit down; I am safe from human justice; and, as to your making a scene here under present circumstances, it would be decidedly vulgar and in bad taste. If you cannot hang me, listen at least

You may, when I am dead, repeat the story for the information of whom it may concern."

There is no evidence to show that the incorporation of this incident in the story had much effect on the public mind, or led its readers to think that the confession of Dominique You was "truth" as distinct from the acknowledged "fiction" of part of the book.

In 1879 Mrs. Stella Edwards Pierpont Drake addressed the following communication to the editor of the Washington Post, which bore for headlines: "The Fate of Theodosia Burr. Another Addition to the Reports Concerning it. Remorseful Pirate Sailor's Alleged Story."

I see by the Chicago Inter-Ocean of June 28, and the Chicago Times of July 7, that the mystery connected with the death of Theodosia Burr Alston had been again brought to public notice. As the articles from these papers were taken from the Post, I write to you because my story corroborates it.

In 1850, an old man, who, years before, had been a sailor, an occupant of the Cass County Poorhouse, Cassopolis, Michigan, in conversing with a lady, the wife of a Methodist minister, about his past life, filled with wrong-doing and crime, said that the act which caused him the most remorse was the tipping of the plank on which Mrs. Alston, the daughter of Aaron Burr, walked into the ocean.

Said he: "I was a sailor on a pirate vessel. We captured the vessel in which the lady was. When told she must walk the plank into the ocean, she asked for a few moments alone, which was granted. She came forward when told her time had expired, dressed beautifully in white, the loveliest woman I had ever seen. Calmly she stepped upon the plank. With eyes raised to the heavens and hands crossed reverently upon her bosom, she walked slowly and firmly into the ocean, without an apparent tremor. Had I refused to perform my work, as I wish with all my heart I had, my death would have been sure and certain."

This is the testimony of an almost dying man, the confession of

the most terrible act of his life. It seems to me, when an old man, bemoaning his life, filled with sin, makes such a confession, without any provocation whatever than the unburdening of his soul during his preparation for another life — for death came soon after — that there must be truth in his statement.

The lady to whom the confession was made repeated to my grandmother, whose maiden name was Mary Edwards, and who was a cousin of Aaron Burr, the story as I have told it, as she had frequently heard her speak of the mystery concerning the death of Mrs. Alston.

STELLA E. P. DRAKE.

STURGIS, ST. JO. COUNTY, MICH., July 27, 1879.

The preceding appeared later in "The Tuttle Family" (89) with the heading: "Theodosia Burr's Fate. The Alleged Confession of a Penitent old Pirate."

The poem which follows was written about 1882 by Mrs. A. E. W. Wadsworth, of Cambridge, Mass. She read the pirate's confession, if she remembers correctly, in the Providence, R. I., Evening Bulletin. It was probably copied from either the Chicago Inter-Ocean, Chicago Times, or the Washington Post.

#### FATE OF THEODOSIA, DAUGHTER OF AARON BURR

In vain she pleaded for her life,  
And for the noble few  
Who heard the pirate chief their doom  
Shout to his blood-stained crew.

A black, ill-omened banner waved  
Above them where they stood,  
Each waiting for the fearful leap  
Into the deep dark flood.

In calm despair she crossed the deck,  
And fainter grew her breath,  
Until upon the fatal plank  
She faced the terror death.

## HER SUPPOSED FATE

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One thought of earth and all held dear,  
A prayer, one moment more,  
A plunge, a cry, a gasping shriek!  
Oh, God! and all was o'er.

We ask why one Omnipotent  
Could not those brave hearts save,  
And wonder why the fates decreed  
For them a sea-girt grave.

But we cannot the mystery solve,  
God's secrets are untold,  
Till in his grand immortal realm  
He will life's page unfold.

When conjecture, or imagination, is given full rein, without the restraining influence of knowledge of accepted facts, it often becomes absurd. This is forcibly shown by an article from a special correspondent, published in a New York paper (90).

ALEXANDRIA, VA., Dec. 23. — There are a number of graveyards clustered together in this quaint old town, and the visitors to each denominational burying-ground are many, especially on Sundays. In the plot over which St. Paul's Episcopal Church has control, there is one grave, over which there is a flat stone, and on the latter is the following inscription:

"To the memory of a female stranger whose mortal sufferings terminated on the 14th day of October, 1816, aged 23 years and 8 months.

This stone is placed here by her disconsolate husband, in whose arms she sighed her latest breath and who under God did his utmost to soothe the cold, dread ear of death.

How loved, how valued once avails thee not,  
To whom related, or by whom begot;  
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,  
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be.

To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name who-



soever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Acts, 10th chapter, 43d verse."

There is a willow tree standing at the head of the grave, and the cemetery is the favorite promenade of the citizens of Alexandria on a Sunday afternoon, many of whom linger around the grave of the female stranger.

Visiting the cluster of cemeteries on a week day, and gazing intently on the last resting place of the strange female, an old gentleman named Monroe walked up and said:

"You seem to be interested in the slab before you."

I stated that I was.

"Do you know who is buried there?"

I answered that I did not, and he said: "That is supposed to be the grave of Theodosia Burr, the only daughter of Aaron Burr, Vice-president of the United States, under President Thomas Jefferson. In the olden days when Alexandria was a thriving commercial city and its port was celebrated for its shipping and the number of fish that were landed there from the Chesapeake Bay, a gentleman and lady — both strangers — arrived in this city and stopped at the City Hotel. The man was English to all appearances and the lady evidently an American. She was of very dark complexion. Her face was of oval shape and she was noted for her beauty, but in a few days after their arrival the lady took sick. A doctor was sent for, and as soon as he arrived, the supposed husband of the lady placed a brace of pistols on a table and said to the doctor: 'Do not be too inquisitive; ask her no questions about her family or connections; treat her for her disease, whatever it is, and cure her if you can. But if you ask any questions not relating to her bodily trouble, I shall blow your head off.'"

"Whether this threat had anything to do with the lady's sudden taking off or not, I am at a loss to say," said the strange old gentleman, and continuing stated that it was sufficient to know that the lady died and was buried beneath that stone.

"The man has been here several times since, but whether he was the lady's husband or not, it is hard for me to say, as he was a man of few words and when on his visits rarely spoke to anybody or mingled in society. The husband of Theodosia Burr was Governor Alston of South Carolina, but if it was he who used to visit the grave of the female stranger, he did not make himself known, and, taken altogether, it is a mysterious case," said my informant in conclusion.

A little calm reflection will show the historical impossibility of this article containing even the semblance of truth. The "female stranger" is said to have died on the 14th day of October, 1816, aged 23 years and 8 months. As Theodosia was born in June, 1783, she was in her 30th year when the *Patriot* sailed from Georgetown. As Governor Alston died on September 10, 1816, he could not possibly have been present at the deathbed of the "female stranger" on October 16 of the same year. The article is given simply as an illustration of a correspondent's vagary, founded wholly upon imagination, or, as is commonly said, "a yarn made out of whole cloth."

In 1894 a new version of the "pirate's story" appeared. The New York Mail and Express, on February 24, printed an article entitled "Aaron Burr's Daughter." It was not prepared for the paper in question, being copied from a contemporary magazine (91).

When Burr was tried in Richmond for treason, the peerless Theodosia accompanied him, bravely and proudly sharing his imprisonment, encouraging and supporting him in his darkest hours, and believing implicitly in his innocence to the last. She was equally devoted to her husband and to her only son, young Aaron Burr Alston, who died in his eleventh year, just before his grandfather's return to New York from his long exile. Aaron Burr pined for his daughter's companionship; she was almost crushed by the death of her darling son; so it was arranged that she should visit her father in New York. She accordingly set sail from Georgetown, S. C., in the *Patriot*, a small pilot boat, on December 30, 1812.

It was generally supposed that the *Patriot* was wrecked off Cape Hatteras during a storm which occurred soon after it set sail; subsequent events, however, have thrown new light on the catastrophe, and the fate of Theodosia Burr seems at last emerging from the clouds which have so long wrapt it in obscurity. A picture has been found

on the North Carolina coast, which there is strong reason to suppose is a portrait of this unfortunate woman; and the story connected with it is romantic and intensely interesting.

The late Dr. W. C. Pool found what is supposed to be a portrait of Mrs. Alston at Nag's Head, N. C., in 1869. The woman who owned it told the following story regarding it:

Shortly after her marriage to her first husband, Mr. Tillett, one winter morning, "when we were fighting the English," a pilot boat was discovered near Kitty Hawk, two miles below Nag's Head. The boat, which had all sails set and the rudder lashed, seemed to be turned adrift. Upon boarding the vessel, the wreckers found it to be in good condition, but entirely deserted. There was no sign of blood or violence of any kind and a table was set for some meal. The supposition of the wreckers was that the boat had been boarded by pirates, and all the passengers and crew made to "walk the plank." In the cabin, among other things not of great value, were several handsome silk dresses, a vase of beautiful wax flowers, with a glass covering and a shell resembling the nautilus, exquisitely carved. Hanging on the wall of the cabin was this portrait of a beautiful woman, which, with other things mentioned, Mr. Tillett received as his share of the spoils, presenting them all to his future wife, afterwards Mrs. Mann.

The pilot boat to which Mrs. Mann referred came ashore two miles below Nag's Head, "one winter morning when we were fighting the English." This must have been during the war of 1812, since Mrs. Mann's age would preclude her remembrance of any other war of the United States and Great Britain. The *Patriot*, a small pilot boat, which was to convey Mrs. Alston to her father in New York, set sail from Georgetown, S. C., December 30, 1812, and was never afterwards heard of. In making the voyage, the *Patriot* must necessarily have passed the North Carolina coast. The sea at this time was infested with pirates. It is not improbable that a band of these bold buccaneers boarded the little vessel in the hope of securing valuable booty, and after compelling everyone on board to "walk the plank," were alarmed by the sudden appearance of some United States cruiser and from motives of prudence abandoned their prize.

Some years ago two criminals, executed in Norfolk, Va., confessed having participated in the murder of Theodosia Burr. They professed to have belonged to a piratical crew who boarded the *Patriot*

and compelled every soul on board to "walk the plank." Two sailors, one dying in Texas, and the other in a Michigan poorhouse, made deathbed confessions to the same effect. Both professed to remember Theodosia well, and the mendicant said he could never forget her face as she begged for her life; that it had haunted him ever since and given him no rest. She told the pirates that she was the daughter of Aaron Burr and wife of Governor Alston, of South Carolina, and would promise them pardon and a liberal reward if they would spare her life. But they were relentless, and the waters hid her beautiful face forever. She was the last to step over the ship's side, refused to be blindfolded, and met her fate with a calm and fearless demeanor. It is impossible to vouch for the truth of these confessions, which have appeared from time to time in print; I only introduce them as collateral evidence in support of Mrs. Mann's assertions. In order to prove more fully that the picture in his possession was a likeness of Aaron Burr's daughter, Dr. Pool opened a correspondence with several members of the Burr and Edwards families, and sent them photographs of the portrait. Almost without exception they have pronounced it a likeness of this unfortunate lady.

In the following year the story took an approved poetic form, appearing in a New York magazine (92).

#### THE WRECKER'S STORY<sup>1</sup>

On December 30, 1812, Theodosia, the beautiful, accomplished, and devoted daughter of Aaron Burr, and wife of Governor Alston of South Carolina, stunned by the ruin of her father and the death of her boy, took passage on the *Patriot*, a pilot boat, to join her father in New York. The vessel never came to port. It is known that a storm raged on the Carolina coast on New Year's day, 1813, and the circumstantial evidence seems conclusive that the *Patriot* fell into the hands of "bankers." These were wreckers and pirates who infested the long sand-bars that fence the coast outside of Currituck, Albemarle, and Pamlico sounds, and reach as far south as Cape Lookout. It was their practice, on stormy nights, to decoy passing craft by means of a lantern swinging from the neck of an old nag, which they led up and down the beach. Thus vessels were stranded on the banks off Kitty

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1895, by the Century Co. From *The Century Magazine*, by permission.

Hawk and Nag's Head, and plundered, after the crews and passengers had been slain with hangers or compelled to "walk the plank." Long after the disappearance of the *Patriot*, two criminals executed at Norfolk, Virginia, confessed to having had a hand in the death of Theodosia Burr. They were, they said, members of a gang of "bankers" who wrecked and pillaged the *Patriot*, forcing her people to walk the plank.

In revel and carousing  
 We gave the New Year housing,  
 With wreckage for our firing,  
 And rum to heart's desiring,  
 Antigua and Jamaica,  
 Flagon and stoup and beaker.  
 Full cans and a ranting chorus;  
 Hard hearts for the bout before us:  
 To brave grim death's grimaces  
 On dazed and staring faces,  
 With dirks and hangers bristling,  
 We for a gale went whistling.

Accompanying this stanza is a picture of a rudely built room with a fire blazing in the open fireplace. Gathered about it on one side are a group of men, drinking and carousing. At the other side is one woman who seems to be peering into the fire.

Inlet and sound confounding,  
 Hatteras roared and rumbled,  
 Currituck heaved and tumbled;  
 And the sea-gulls screamed like witches,  
 And sprawled in the briny ditches.  
 Shelter and rest we flouted,  
 Jorum and pipe we scouted,  
 Fiddler and wench we routed.  
 "Fetch out the nag!" we shouted;  
 For a craft in the offing struggled.  
 "Now for a skipper juggled;  
 Now for a coaster stranded,  
 And loot in the lockers landed!"  
 With lantern cheerily rocking.

## HER SUPPOSED FATE

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Beside these lines is a picture of a portion of beach, with the breakers dashing high on the shore. Overhead the clouds are black as ink and birds are flying towards the shore.

Tornado or pampero,  
To swamp the host of Pharaoh;  
To goad the mad Atlantic,  
And drive the skippers frantic;  
To jar the deep with thunder,  
And make the waste a wonder,  
And plunge the coasters under,  
And pile the banks with plunder.  
Then the wild rack came skirling,  
Ragged and crazed, and whirling  
Sea-stuff and sand in breakers,  
Frothing the shelvy acres,  
Over the banks high bounding.

With these lines is a picture of the old nag with a lantern tied around her neck. Just a glimpse of the water can be seen, and in the shadow is a group of men, evidently the wreckers.

On the nag's head, we went mocking,  
Lilting of tipsy blisses,  
And Bonniel's squandered kisses.  
Straight for that hell-spark steering,  
Drove the doomed craft careering;  
Men on her fore-deck huddled,  
Sea in her wake all cruddled,  
Kitty Hawk sheer before her,  
And the breakers booming o'er her,  
Till the rocks in their lurking stove her,  
And her riven spars went over,  
And she lay on her side and shivered,  
And groaned to be delivered.

With these lines is a picture of the vessel as she is being dashed on the shore. The waves are breaking over the bow. The name "*Patriot*" is on the stern. In the distance can be seen a light.

Gruesome in death's grimaces;  
And God's wrath overpast us,

## THEODOSIA

With never a bolt to blast us!  
 By the brunt of our doings daunted,  
 We crouched where the fore-deck slanted,  
 Scanning each other's faces,  
 Graved with that horror's traces.  
 One, peering aft, wild-staring,  
 Points through the torches flaring:  
 "Spook of the storm, or human?  
 Angel, or wraith, or woman?"  
 Havoc and wreck surveying,  
 Imploring not, not praying.  
 Nor death nor life refusing;  
 Stony and still — accusing!  
 Boats through the black rift storming,  
 Foes on her quarter swarming,  
 Dirks in the torchlight flashing,  
 And the wicked hangers slashing;  
 Lips that were praying mangled;  
 Throats that were screaming, strangled;  
 Souls in the surges tumbling,  
 Vainly for foothold fumbling;  
 Horror of staring faces.

With these last lines is a picture of the *Patriot* as she lies tossing to and fro among the rocks. A small boat filled with men is approaching her.

Black as our hearts the creature's  
 Vesture; her matchless features  
 White as the dead. Oh! wonder  
 Of woman high heaven under!  
 So she moved down upon us  
 (Though Death and the Fiend might shun us)  
 And we made passage cowering.

Accompanying these lines is a picture of a portion of the deck of the *Patriot*. A light is hanging in the rigging. Its rays fall directly upon the face of Theodosia, as she confronts the wreckers, who stand aside making a passage for her. The faces of the wreckers betray awe, and one of them has his hand raised, as though to prevent her nearer approach.



Theodosia "walking the plank," — from John Williamson  
Palmer's poem in the Century Magazine.



Theodosia before the Pirates — from John Williamson  
Palmer's poem in the Century Magazine.





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Rigid and mute and towering,  
Never a frown she deigned us,  
Never with curse arraigned us.  
One, trembling, dropped his hanger,  
And swooned at the awful clangor;  
But she passed on, unharking,  
Her steps our doom-strokes marking.  
Straight to the plank, and mounted.  
"One, two, three, four!" we counted;  
Till she paused, o'er the flood suspended,  
Poised, her lithe arms extended —  
And the storm stood still, and waited  
For the stroke of the Lord belated.

JOHN WILLIAMSON PALMER.

Accompanying the last lines is a picture of Theodosia walking the plank. She stands near the end of the plank, in a black (?) dress, with arms and eyes raised to Heaven. The wreckers are gathered about the plank on the deck and are watching her with expressions of fear or wonder in their eyes.

While engaged upon his romance "Blennerhassett; or, The Decrees of Fate," the writer, in search of information, corresponded with many persons. The following is taken from a private letter from Mr. William L. Stone, of Mount Vernon, New York:

In 1857, on one of my trips to Europe, I had as a fellow passenger, a doctor, who was apparently well posted. He told me then that it was thought that Babe, the pirate, had captured the vessel in which Theodosia came from South Carolina to see her father, and which you remember was never heard of afterwards. I saw "Babe" in the Tombs in New York, when I was about two years old. Anyway, I give this to you so you may have all the facts and rumors at your command.

In order to show the growth of the "pirate story," it is necessary to indulge in some virtual repetitions; in fact, the story has had as many literary colors as

Jacob's coat had visible ones. The magnetic needle always points to the, so far, unreachable North Pole, and these stories, although varying in phraseology, have but one logical conclusion to be drawn from them — the tragic death of Theodosia at the hands of pirates.

On June 4, 1895, the following appeared in the New York World and the Philadelphia Record:

ELKTON, MD., June 4. — The story of how Aaron Burr's only child, beautiful, young Theodosia, met her death at the hands of ocean pirates years ago, and how that fact was only recently established by the discovery of a portrait of her, rescued from the schooner from whence she was thrown into the sea, is told in print herewith for the first time. Involving, as it does, the deathbed confession of one of the pirates who drowned the young woman, the tale seems more like fiction than verified history, but there are persons living hereabouts who have verified it in detail, and who will vouch for its accuracy.

Theodosia Burr, a young woman of unusual mental attainments, was married to the son of Judge Alston of South Carolina, a relative of Washington Allston, the celebrated historical portrait painter. Mr. and Mrs. Alston resided on their plantation near Charleston. When Aaron Burr contemplated returning from the extended visit he had made to Europe after his trial, he wrote Mrs. Alston, to whom he was devotedly attached, asking her to meet him in New York on his arrival there. Mr. Alston, engrossed with the business of his plantation, found it impossible to accompany his wife. There being no railroads in those days, and Mr. Alston deeming that a summer (?) trip from Charleston to New York by sea would be less irksome to his wife than a stage journey by land, chartered a coasting schooner. In this, Mrs. Alston set out. She took with her, as a present to her father, a beautiful painting of herself. But she never reached New York, and down to the present day the fate of Aaron Burr's only child has been a matter of speculation among historians, some contending that the vessel and all on board were lost at sea, others asserting that Mrs. Alston fell into the hands of some of the pirates, who, in those days, infested the Atlantic coast.

But the mystery has at last been cleared up. Its accuracy is vouched for by the former rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, Elkton, a clergyman well known throughout Maryland and the Middle States.

About five years ago this clergyman was visiting in his native State, North Carolina, and for several days was the guest of the widow of Dr. William Poole, near Elizabeth City. Above the mantelpiece in Mrs. Poole's parlor was an old-fashioned painting, exquisitely executed, of a beautiful young woman, dressed in white. It so greatly interested the clergyman that he asked Mrs. Poole whom it was intended to represent. She then gave the following story of it:

Eight years previously, she said, Dr. Poole had taken his family to pass the summer at the little coast town of Nag's Head, N. C., where the United States man-of-war Huron came to grief.

The place is largely populated by "bankers" — generally a rough class of men, who mainly earn a livelihood by picking up all species of flotsam and jetsam along the coast. One of these "bankers," however, was a very respectable and very old fellow named Mann. His wife was suffering from a complication of diseases and Dr. Poole took great interest in her case. Under his treatment she recovered and, as a token of gratitude to the Doctor, presented him with the painting which so greatly interested the clergyman. Mrs. Mann said that her husband had recovered it from a wreck. When quite a young man he was walking along the shore one morning. His attention was then called to a coasting schooner under full sail, bearing swiftly down upon the dangerous bar, which, in later days, occasioned the loss of the Huron. With other "bankers" Mann put out to her assistance.

They boarded the schooner, but found that the only living thing aboard was a little black and tan dog. Careful inspection of the schooner proved nothing as to her antecedents. Even her name was not ascertainable. But one of the cabins had evidently been very recently occupied by a woman, and in this cabin was the painting which Mrs. Mann gave Dr. Poole, and which Mann appropriated as his share of the salvage. The schooner shortly afterward went to pieces.

Dr. Poole was an enthusiastic student of national matters. He felt certain that the picture had a very valuable history and formed a suspicion that it might have represented the mysteriously lost daughter of Aaron Burr. He put himself in communication with

several historical societies on the matter, but his theory found little weight, in spite of a family likeness being admitted.

As the clergyman upon whose authority this story is given was returning from a recent visit to Mrs. Poole, while driving from that lady's house to Elizabeth City to take the cars home, he met a young man whom he knew to be very bashful and much afraid of the gentler sex, driving a strange woman in a buggy toward Mrs. Poole's residence. In a letter written to Mrs. Poole shortly afterward, he good-naturedly referred to the incident and to the young fellow's evident embarrassment.

This brought from Mrs. Poole another chapter in the story of the beautiful picture. The strange woman was a descendant of the Burr family, who resides in Detroit, Mich. Her name has temporarily escaped the clergyman's memory. She had been visiting at Virginia Beach, Va., where she had heard of Mrs. Poole's mysterious painting from a North Carolina gentleman. Her visit to Elizabeth City was solely for the purpose of seeing the painting, and no sooner had she set eyes on it than she offered Mrs. Poole \$300 spot cash for the same, besides any additional sum she might require. Mrs. Poole refused to part with the treasure. She told the visitor that there was a strong family likeness between the latter and the subject of the picture, whoever that subject might have been; and further informed her of the facts, already given here, as to how the painting came into her possession.

This elicited from the Detroit woman another remarkable reminiscence, and one which, taken in connection with the foregoing facts, proves that the painting is that of Aaron Burr's daughter — the one destined as a present to her father — and that the unfortunate young woman was drowned by pirates. This, in substance, is the Detroit woman's story:

With her mother, in Detroit, formerly resided her mother's aged aunt, a humane woman who gave up much time to visiting the poor and sick. One evening, in one of the wards of the Marine Hospital of that city, was a dying sailor, who seemed terribly startled as the aunt, in company with others, approached his bedside. He beckoned her to him, however, and after begging that she alone of the visitors might hear what he had to say — a request which the others granted by retiring to the next ward — he stated that when a young man he had one summer been on a pirate vessel off the North Carolina coast.

He went on to say that he had then helped to overhaul a north-bound coasting schooner:

On the vessel was a beautiful, young, feminine passenger, dressed all in white. He had assisted in dragging her from her cabin, in which was hanging up a painting of herself. While the pirates were engaged in throwing the crew overboard, he noted that this beautiful young lady paced the deck, with magnificent courage and dignity, her hands folded on her breast, her eyes raised to heaven. She made no remonstrance whatever, and he steadied the plank upon which she walked to the vessel's side, thence to be plunged headlong into the ocean. He wanted to take away her picture and her dog — a little black and tan fellow — but dreaded to touch either. After the pirates had plundered the schooner of money and other treasures, they abandoned the vessel, having set it under full sail, the dog aboard. The dying sailor said that the young woman's sweet face had haunted him throughout life, and his confession was prompted by a striking resemblance between her and his elderly listener.

Mrs. Poole's visitor stated that the sailor's story had been for years a current tradition of the descendants of Burr's family, though they had hitherto paid very little attention to it. Its extraordinary corroboration by the accidental meeting of these two women appears to settle forever the recent mystery as to the death of Mrs. Alston. The Detroit woman says that the subject of the painting is beyond doubt Aaron Burr's daughter — a statement corroborated by other pictures of that unfortunate woman in her possession, as also by still others belonging to the Alston family.

The "pirate story" and the "picture story" having become combined, the discussion of the question, from this time forward, embraced both these elements.

On July 2, 1901, the late Alexander Quarles Holladay, LL.D., contributed his version of the matter to a New York paper (93).

Dr. William Pool, who died a few years ago, a distinguished physician of Elizabeth City, N. C., was for many years in the habit of spending some weeks of summer at Nag's Head, a surf-bathing resort on the narrow strip of sand known as the Peninsula, separating the great inner sounds of North Carolina from the Atlantic.

Near this little summer village, thirty years ago, lived in sullen, suspicious seclusion Mrs. Tillett, the aged widow of Joseph Tillett, who as far back as 1808 held a sort of eminence among his fellow wreckers and fishermen, and who died before 1850. It so happened during one of Dr. Pool's sojourns at Nag's Head that his professional skill saved the life of the granddaughter of Mrs. Tillett, the only creature for whom her morose old age seemed to feel strong affection, and from this time the aged woman exhibited some feeling of gratitude toward the generous doctor, who with each returning summer renewed his acquaintance, often ministering to her wants and infirmities. At last she told him she would not live to see him return, and that she wished to give him the only thing she possessed that he might value as a small acknowledgment of his long-continued kindness to her, and to his surprise she placed in his hands a well-painted and handsome portrait of a high-bred lady, of which in answer to his urgent inquiry she reluctantly gave this account as coming from her former husband, Joseph Tillett. He told her that before their marriage (I think in 1810), (?) early one morning, as he and his companions were launching their fishing boat, they became aware of a schooner at a considerable distance moving in so peculiar and irregular a manner that instead of pursuing their ordinary fishing they put out to sea and easily overhauled the strange vessel. They found her deserted, floating at random, and upon boarding, appearances indicated that sudden and unexpected events had very recently occurred. An elegantly equipped cabin had apparently been hastily rifled and as hastily abandoned by the plunderers, as upon the floor were found fine laces and undergarments, and drawers broken open were not entirely emptied. On a locker was a portrait in oil of a beautiful woman. Everything went to show that the cabin had been the temporary habitation of a lady of refinement and fortune, who was the only passenger of note on the little vessel. According to the widow's statement, Tillett told her they knew something tragical had occurred, but agreed not to talk about what was over and could not be remedied, and proceeded to divide among themselves what was left on the ill-fated vessel. As part of his share, Tillett demanded and received the portrait and some of the laces, all of which he gave to his bride of the next year, who repeated this ghastly and suggestive story to Dr. Pool near sixty years later.

Dr. Pool never felt sure he had been told the whole truth, nor even

the exact truth as far as the story went, though he did not suspect, so far as I ever heard, that Tillett and his companions were the pirates who first waylaid and then sacked the vessel, causing all on board to walk the plank, but it seemed at least possible that Tillett knew more than he chose to tell.

Dr. Pool was well acquainted with the melancholy tradition of Mrs. Governor Alston's disappearance at this time and in this neighborhood, and took some pains by such inquiry as could be made of the few still living who remembered her to clear up the mystery and fix the identity of the portrait. Such evidence as he could still collect was probably short of absolute demonstration, but it was such as to make not only Dr. Pool but many others believe the picture to be a veritable portrait of Theodosia Burr Alston, and the one silent witness left of that ocean tragedy.

This portrait still hangs on the walls of the old Pool residence, in Elizabeth City, and is in the possession of gentle people who will not refuse inspection of it to any serious inquirer.

ALEXANDER Q. HOLLADAY, LL.D.

NEW YORK, July 2, 1901.

In a private letter, of date October 5, 1901, a member of the Edwards family wrote to the author of "Blennerhassett": "I read your 'Blennerhassett' with absorbing interest, but frankly will say that friend Parton should have been given credit somewhere for his (to me) splendid vindication of Burr. Tell me for true if your account of the capture and death of Theodosia is a fact, or only a part of the romance? Pardon the doubt, but the family tradition is that she was lost in a storm. There is still living in Binghamton, New York, a granddaughter of Jonathan Edwards, consequently a cousin of Burr. She remembers him well and has talked to me about him. He (Burr) did not believe the pirate story."

"Blennerhassett" was published in September, 1901. It was widely reviewed, and the considera-



tion given in the newspaper articles to Colonel Burr and his daughter brought the question of her fate prominently before the public.

On November 25, 1901, the Springfield (Mass.) Republican copied an article from a New York paper entitled "The Fate of Theodosia Alston" (94).

The talk of an Aaron Burr revival again arouses interest in the mysterious fate of Theodosia, Burr's fair and brilliant daughter. The uncertainty about her death forms one of those curious lapses of history which are rich in rumor, but seemingly lacking in authenticated fact.

It is noticeable that the author of the recent novel, "Blennerhassett," in dealing with the fate of Theodosia, drifts with the current of popular belief, which for many years has set strongly towards the theory that the tragedy which plays so conspicuous a part in the romance of American History was the work of wreckers — "pirates," he calls them; "bankers," as the Carolina folks knew them. It is to be noted that "the foundering of the *Patriot* in a storm off Cape Hatteras" was but the convenient conclusion of that time in the absence of all other evidence. That consummation was simply "taken for granted" and passed current for nearly half a century, unchallenged on the one hand and unsupported on the other; there was never a glimmer of proof behind it. The occasional sparks of actual disclosure (from Burr's despair to this romance of "Blennerhassett") have shown the way to a different conclusion.

We know that Burr was warned by many good people of the Carolina coast, denizens of the country near the "banks," that the *Patriot* had fallen a prey to wreckers, the amphibious pirates of those waters. We know that Burr, with characteristic fatalism, refused to consider the omen, and that even Parton, in the absence of that knowledge which has since taken form and voice in a succession of recorded facts, repudiated the insistent story of certain newspapers in Burr's time as "groundless and fanciful."

When Dr. Palmer's striking poem of "Theodosia Burr," as we find it in the little volume of ballads and lyrics entitled "For Charlie's Sake," first appeared in the *Century Magazine*, in 1895, it was preceded by an explanatory note which constituted its "argument."

According to Dr. Palmer's contention, "the circumstantial evidence seems conclusive that the *Patriot* fell into the hands of "bankers." These were wreckers and pirates who infested the long sandy bars that fence the coast outside of Currituck, Albemarle, and Pamlico sounds and stretch as far south as Cape Lookout. It was their practice, on stormy nights, to decoy passing craft by means of a lantern swinging from the neck of an old nag, which they led up and down the beach. Thus vessels were stranded off Kitty Hawk and Nag's Head, and plundered, after the crews and passengers had been slain with hangers or compelled to walk the plank."

I have learned from Dr. Palmer that the banding and the treacherous and murderous practice of these "bankers" were well known along the coast from the Chesapeake capes to Hatteras, in the first quarter of the century, and that as late as 1847 in Accomac and Northampton counties, on the eastern shore of Virginia, two old men, retired mariners, were pointed out to him as former "bankers" and wreckers (1812-14); they were regarded askance and with a certain unneighborly mystery.

A well-known and highly respected physician of North Carolina, Dr. Poole, whose narrative was published, found in a cabin near the coast a woman, old, ignorant, and superstitious, whom he attended in a protracted illness. She was the widow first of one and then of another "banker." On the wall of her cabin hung an oil painting, unframed, the well-executed portrait of a lady whose resemblance to an authentic portrait of Theodosia Burr impressed Dr. Poole and brought him again and again to curious study of it. To his question "How did she come by it?" the woman explained that when she was yet but a slip of a girl and was sweethearting with a young "banker," he brought her that picture, a lady's silk dress, and an ornament of wax flowers, such as at that time were found in many homes of "the quality" as a decoration for the mantelpiece. Her lover explained (and she believed his story) that he had found them on a pilot boat, "abandoned and drifting, not a soul on board, and everything remaining as the people had left it." His mates stripped the vessel, and he had chosen these things as his share to give to her. "It was the time of the war with the English," she said. The picture passed into the possession of Dr. Poole. Photographs of it were submitted to the scrutiny of surviving members of the Burr and Edwards families, by several of whom it was identified as a portrait of Theodosia. The

story, as related by Dr. Poole, who by all who knew him would be accepted as a judicious and trustworthy chronicler, seems to be a striking reflection of the picture presented in the poem.

Many years after the publication of "Blennerhassett," an article was published in the Elizabeth City (North Carolina) Economist of July 31, 1888, and came into the possession of the author. It was headed "That Portrait."

On Thursday last we had a note from our friend Colonel Stark, of Norfolk, who is summering at Virginia Beach, to introduce Mrs. Stella E. P. Drake, a relative by descent of Theodosia Burr Alston, the daughter of Aaron Burr, whose mysterious fate has been the romance of our earlier history and has given rise to various conjectures as to her loss on the voyage from South Carolina to New York to meet her father on his return from his exile in Europe, in 1812. We called on Mrs. Drake at the Albemarle House, and found that the object of her visit to our town was to ascertain by personal examination whether a portrait now in possession of the family of the late Dr. Poole, of Pasquotank County, was really a painting of Theodosia Burr Alston, which had been claimed and commented on by the press of the county at various times within the last six or eight years. We have been familiar with that painting for many years, long before it had come into the possession of Dr. Poole, and it had been indelibly impressed upon our memory, and we had supposed that the opinion that it was a portrait of Mrs. Alston, that it was cast ashore at Kittyhawk, in January, 1813, and saved by the husband of Mrs. Mann, from whom Dr. Poole had obtained it, was not borne out by the dates, but when we saw Mrs. Drake on Thursday, we were startled by her close resemblance to the portrait in question. The same type of female beauty, the same brunette complexion, the same jet hair, the same piercing black eye, the same petite person. The resemblance was startling, and when we reflected that remote kindred generations often reproduce the same face, we for the first time doubted the correctness of our conclusions. We gave Mrs. Drake all the information we had of the portrait, and such other information as might throw light upon her pious mission, and we learn that she visited the family of Dr. Poole, examined the painting, compared it with the

engraved likenesses of Theodosia Burr in Davis' *Life of Burr*, and also with that in Parton's *Life of Burr*, and from a comparison of dates and facts connected with the portrait in possession of the family of Dr. Poole and other information furnished, she was convinced that the portrait was in truth a likeness of Theodosia Burr Alston. The history of Mrs. Alston is tragic and romantic.

In the *Boston Sunday Journal* of April 6, 1902, there was an article signed by Frank W. Lovering. The display head read as follows: "Mystery of Theodosia Burr Solved. Mrs. S. E. P. Drake, a Fourth Cousin of the Famous Daughter of Aaron Burr, Tells a Remarkable Story to the *Sunday Journal*." In relating the communication, it should be remembered that Mrs. S. E. P. Drake and the Mrs. Stella E. P. Drake referred to in the article in the *Economist* are the same person. Mrs. Drake says she wrote to the *Washington Post* in 1878, but her letter as given in "The Tuttle Family" is dated July 27, 1879.

It is almost a century long, this story. I believe what I am going to tell you even as I believe that I am alive this very moment. It is a story which time has made a part of my own life. It is involved, greatly involved, but it is all very clear to me. Some of it is tradition; some of it is fact, because I know what I have seen; I believe the tradition too; traditions which have been handed down in my family for many years.

To begin at the very beginning: When a little girl my mother used to rock me to sleep, telling me a wonderful tale of pirates and how they had caused Theodosia Burr to walk the plank to a fearful death beneath the waves of the ocean. Time and again she told the story. I never tired of it. Repetition made it almost real. My grandmother was the first to hear it, and she told it to my mother. It came about in this way:

#### DYING PIRATE'S CONFESSION

In 1850 an old man, who years before had been a sailor, then an inmate of the Cass County Poorhouse at Cassopolis, Mich., in con-

versing with a lady, Mrs. Parks, the wife of a Methodist minister, about his past life, filled with wrong-doing and crime, said that the act which above all others caused him the most remorse was the tipping of the plank on which Mrs. Alston, the daughter of Aaron Burr, walked into the ocean.

The tale of this dying sinner was substantially as follows: "I was once a sailor on a pirate vessel. We captured the ship on which this lady, with others, was going to New York. When told she must walk the plank, she asked for a few moments alone, which were granted.

Finally she was informed that her time had expired, and without hesitancy she came forward, dressed beautifully in white, the loveliest woman I had ever seen. Calmly she stepped upon the plank, and with eyes raised to heaven, and hands crossed reverently over her breast, she walked slowly and firmly into the ocean, without an apparent tremor. I had no time to really tip the plank, but watched her, transfixed at her marvelous beauty, amazed at her indescribable fortitude.

#### REGRETTED THE ACT

Had I refused to perform my allotted work, as I wish with all my heart I had, my death would have been sure and certain."

That is the pirate's story. I believe it, for it is the testimony of an almost dying man, the confession of the most terrible act of his life. And it seems to me that when an old man, beemoaning his life, filled to the brim with sin, makes such a confession without any provocation whatever other than the unburdening of his soul during his preparation for another life — his death came soon after — there must be truth in his statements.

My grandmother, the granddaughter of Timothy Edwards, the eldest son of Jonathan Edwards, second President of Princeton College, became the wife of James McKinney of Binghamton, N. Y., and with him removed to Sturgis, Mich., in 1836. In 1848, having again removed, this time to Cassopolis, Mich., she became acquainted with Mrs. Parks, as I have already described. Mrs. Parks, deeply interested in religious matters, spent much time at the Cassopolis Poor-house distributing tracts. Time introduced her to the sailor, whose story I have repeated as my mother told it to me, and then it was that he made the fearful confession. Mrs. Parks told the tale to my grandmother, and she to my mother, and from her I first heard it — as a child in the cradle, almost.

You can easily imagine how the weird tale affected me. I read with deepest interest everything concerning the Burrs I could find, particularly about poor Theodosia. Fate meantime prescribed most strangely. I was living at that time in Sturgis, Mich., in my father's home, where many Chicago newspapers came into the house. Even as to-day, I read the papers then with deepest interest, and was both surprised and pleased to come across a short article concerning Theodosia Burr. It was a review of an address given in 1878 by Col. J. H. Wheeler before the North Carolina Historical Society, in the course of which he made the statement that he had recently seen a portrait of a painting owned by Dr. Pool of Elizabeth City, N. C., which purported to represent Aaron Burr's daughter.

This review of the lecture described in detail the finding of the picture, and apparently threw so much light upon the case that I, then little more than a girl, immediately wrote the editor of the Washington Post a letter, in which I related the tradition of the pirate, dying in a Michigan poorhouse, whose name was Benjamin Franklin Burdick, commonly known, my grandmother said, as Old Frank.

This letter was printed the latter part of July, 1878. Shortly after that, the New Orleans Democrat took the matter up, and consolidated both stories. From that day I resolved that I would see this portrait of Theodosia Burr.

#### MRS. DRAKE SEES THE PICTURE

It was for me that the first photographic reproduction of the picture was made. From that photograph, made by a traveling artist, I had enlarged this picture (taking from a package the photograph which is reproduced in half-tone in connection with this story).

And now, as well as any time, I will relate the incidents of the finding of the original, and how I came at last to see it. My father and mother were at Virginia Beach, N. C., for the summer of '88, and I joined them there after a visit in Massachusetts. One dark, stormy day, while we were looking out on the ocean from the veranda of the Princess Ann, I said:

"Father, are we near Nag's Head, where Dr. Pool found the supposed portrait of Theodosia Burr?"

He replied by suggesting that I ask the hotel clerk, who would probably be able to give me the information. I did so, and found that Nag's Head, where the portrait was found, and Elizabeth

City, where the Pool family lived, were only a few miles down the coast.

I then told the story of the portrait and of my desire to see it. He became interested and said that an old friend of Dr. Pool's—Colonel Starke, a lawyer in Norfolk—was summering at the Princess Ann, and that he would see the Colonel and ask him to call upon my father. Colonel Starke called the same day, and the result was that the next day found me on my way to Elizabeth City, with letters of introduction from Colonel Starke to the Pool family, to his friend, Mr. Creasy, the editor of the Elizabeth City (N. C.) Economist, and to the proprietors of the Albemarle House. Upon arriving at my destination, and almost immediately after presenting my letters of credentials, I was called upon by Mr. Creasy, the editor, and also by the proprietor of the Albemarle. Both men, with the characteristic hospitality of the Southern race, entered heartily into my plans to see the portrait.

Mr. Creasy had much to say of the finding of the portrait by Mr. Pool, and after an agreeable talk of a half hour, bade me adieu, with the hope that I would be able to prove the portrait a Burr.

Soon after, with the proprietor of the Albemarle, I started on my way to Eyrie, the plantation of the Pools.

#### STRANGE INTUITION

I need not describe the place. The original Pool mansion had been burned previously, and I found the family living in a smaller dwelling, with one of those old-fashioned hallways and hospitable rooms on either side. Passing into the house and having presented my letter of introduction to Miss Pool, daughter of the Doctor, she invited me into the parlor. As I turned to go through the door, I saw upon the wall above the mantelpiece a portrait of a young woman in white.

"That is the picture," I exclaimed. "I know it is, because it bears a strong resemblance to my sister!"

Miss Pool listened in amazement, for she had not yet pointed the portrait out to me, while I related that my sister, who is now Mrs. Catherine D. Herbert of Idaho Falls, Ia., bore a striking resemblance to the picture above the mantel. The moment I looked upon that portrait I felt certain that it was Theodosia Burr. Why?

Because of our blood relationship. She was my fourth cousin, and you know it has been proven more than once that remote kindred

generations often produce the same face. It does not appear that any other in the Edwards family resembled the picture of Theodosia save my sister, although Mr. Creasy, the editor, with whom I conversed, said that he noted a look about the eyes and an expression upon my face at times as I conversed that was unmistakably like that in the picture, though he had not seen it for twenty years.

#### SISTER'S STRONG LIKENESS

This picture of my sister (handing the writer a photograph which is here reproduced) was posed in imitation of Theodosia some years ago. Do you note the striking resemblance? Isn't it remarkable? Do you see any reason why I should disbelieve that the original picture is really of Theodosia Burr? Of course, I have no other evidence to convince me save that of the law of consanguinity, but to me that is amply sufficient.

The portrait of Theodosia is on wood, beautifully executed, and quite evidently by a master. It shows her in a white empire gown — such a gown, undeniably, as a woman of Theodosia's cast would wear — and with her hair dressed in a style most common a hundred years ago. The portrait may be 12 by 18 inches square. As the photograph shows, it had been damaged by fire at the time I saw it — by the fire which destroyed the mansion of the Pools at Eyrie.

However, I find myself diverging. Let us go back to my first meeting with the portrait. After I had recovered myself, I turned to Miss Pool and related in detail the story I have told you of the dying pirate in the Michigan poorhouse. She listened with growing wonder to the end. Then she said: "Let me tell you now my story of how that portrait came into my possession." And then she told me a most extraordinary tale — but I believe it.

#### PAINTING FOUND IN A WRECK

"My father was W. G. Pool, a physician," Miss Pool said. "In the course of his career, he was called, some eight or ten years ago (in 1868 or 1870), to visit, in his professional capacity, a family near what is known as Nag's Head, or Kittyhawk, not far from Elizabeth City, on Cape Hatteras. Then a small child, I went with him. The woman, a Mrs. Mann, was very sick. She had no faith in doctors and did not believe that father could do her any good, though she had consented to call him. When he and I entered the little house for the



first time, I was struck by a picture of a beautiful young woman hanging on the wall. For moments at a time I stared at the portrait, saying again and again that it was the most beautiful picture I had ever seen.

"Whenever father went to attend the sick woman, I begged to be taken along that I might gaze at the portrait, and many times my wish was granted. At last, father tried to buy the picture, but the woman refused to sell it at any price. She told, however, a startling story. Years before, she said, she had been wooed by a youth who was a fisherman.

#### A LOVER'S GIFTS

"One day he brought her a number of gifts among which was the portrait. There were also two silk dresses, one black and the other white, and a lace head covering, such as Southern women wear. The dresses were made of beautiful material — of such material as Theodosia Burr would certainly affect. The woman, who subsequently became Mrs. Mann, asked her lover where he obtained the presents, and he replied that he found them on a vessel which he and other fishermen had boarded.

"These men were believed to be 'bankers,' a rough class of men who earn a livelihood by picking up all species of flotsam and jetsam along the coast. It is said that they used to lure ships upon the rocks for the sake of plundering them, by tying a string of lanterns about a horse's head at night, and causing the animal to walk up and down the beach. The sailors, seeing the bobbing lights, would frequently make for the shore, their craft would run aground, and opportunity for plundering was thus easily presented."

#### STRANGE UNMANNED CRAFT ASHORE

Continuing, however, Miss Pool said: "Mrs. Mann's lover recited to her how that morning, just at dawn, he and his companions had descried a small pilot boat driving straight towards Nag's Head, with rudder set and all sails drawing. Not a soul was visible on the craft, and after she struck, the men boarded her. Careful inspection revealed nothing as to her identity. Abandoned, she had headed for Cape Hatteras in the height of a terrible gale. One of the cabins had evidently been recently occupied by a woman, and in that cabin was this portrait and the articles of feminine wearing apparel. These the

lover appropriated as his share of the salvage, and afterwards presented them to his sweetheart."

Miss Pool doubted my story of the pirates at first. I reasoned with her for some time, using the facts she had told me to strengthen my case.

"But," she said, "when pirates board a vessel, do they not scuttle it and set it afire?"

"That may be true," I replied, "but there are many ways one may look at this matter. Remember that all this occurred in the days of the second war with England, and it is by no means impossible that an English, or even an American man-o'-war may have run across the track of the little vessel, and compelled the pirates to flee for their lives." In the end I think I convinced Miss Pool that my phase of the question might be true.

#### PORTRAIT STILL EXISTS

And this is about all there is to the story. The supposed portrait of Theodosia Burr is now owned by Dr. Pool's daughter, who is Mrs. Overman of Elizabeth City. The picture finally came into Dr. Pool's possession as a gift from Mrs. Mann, who presented it to him because he had instilled in her a real faith in the power of physicians to heal the sick.

There is no doubt that Theodosia Burr set sail from Charleston for New York to meet her father, but whether she took with her a portrait as a gift is to a certain degree conjecture. In view of the extraordinary facts concerning this picture, now owned by Mrs. Overman, I am certain that she did. In view of the facts concerning the deathbed confession of the pirate, I am equally certain that she met her death at the hands of a lawless band, of which he was a member. In view of the possibilities offered by the presence of warships in the waters near Cape Hatteras, at that time, there is ample reason to believe that the pirates were frightened away before they had a chance to scuttle the *Patriot*, and that it subsequently came ashore with those things in the cabin which Mrs. Mann's youthful lover found and presented to her.

To my mind, everything dovetails in to a nicety, settling without question the manner in which fair Theodosia met her fate. She died at the hands of lawless men near Cape Hatteras — times before and since the grave of the fearless and gallant — with the wild foam of

the Atlantic for her winding-sheet and the fierce north wind for her requiem.

Mrs. Drake's "pirate story" was published on April 6, 1902. It was widely copied. Among the newspapers giving it publicity were the *Augusta (Me.) Journal*; the *Tilton (N. H.) Enterprise* on May 5; the *Gardiner (Me.) Independence* on May 10; the *Philadelphia Press* on July 20; the *Boston Sunday Post* on September 14; the *New York Sun* on September 15; the *Bangor (Me.) Commercial* on September 16; the *Wilkesbarre (Pa.) News* on September 21; the *Portsmouth (N. H.) Times*, October 15; the *Lebanon (Pa.) Times* on October 16; the *Fall River (Mass.) Herald*, October 20; the *El Paso (Texas) Herald* on November 1; the *New York Journal* on November 2; the *Salt Lake City (Utah) Herald*, November 2; the *Southbridge (Mass.) Press*, November 15; the *Freeland (Penn.) Tribune*, November 19; and the *Knoxville (Tenn.) Tribune*, April 29, 1903; on November 9 the *New York Journal-American* printed an article containing portraits of Mrs. Drake, Mrs. E. M. Miller, of Salt Lake City, two of Mrs. Drake's sisters, besides one of Theodosia. In this article Mrs. Drake's story was put into a new form containing the essential particulars. On November 10 Mrs. Drake's version appeared again in the *Salt Lake City Herald*.

On July 13, 1902, the *Houston (Texas) Post* printed the "pirate story" previously given, which appeared originally in the *Alabama Journal*, then in the *Mobile Register*, and later in the *New York Sun*.

The "pirate story" was not allowed to go unchallenged, although it really could not be contradicted.

An aged member of the Alston family, a resident of Washington, D. C., in the New York Times Saturday Review of May 31, 1902, gave what he considered to be "The True Story of her Death at Sea," referring, of course, to Theodosia.

Your most valuable and interesting paper from time to time passed in review the above named. Will you allow the writer to set the story at rest, for all time, by sending you a true account of the tragic fate of this lovely and accomplished woman?

Soon after the war of 1812 there were almost yearly accounts of her sad end, and naturally most distressing to the family in Carolina and to her father and many friends in New York. Pirates when about to expiate their fearful crimes at the "yard arm" made full and free confessions of having been present when this beautiful woman was made to "walk the plank" from more than one piratical craft. Many years have now elapsed, and these sensational accounts have well-nigh been exhausted, and the "portraits" of her have been discussed in your Review.

Those interested in her will read with much pleasure the correspondence between Aaron Burr and his daughter after her marriage to Joseph Alston of South Carolina. Her letters were from Hagley and the Oaks, rice plantations of theirs, on the Waccamaw River, South Carolina, and from the old Alston residence on King Street, Charleston. This volume is, of course, out of print, but may possibly be found in some private library in New York, as those at the South were mostly burned during the un-civil war. Those letters would of course only be of interest to those who would appreciate her home life at the South. The devotion which existed between father and daughter was very great; he had spared no pains on her education and was proud of her intelligence and many fine traits, and she had returned the same with, as will be seen, her undying love. The summer home of the Alstons was on Debordieu Island, on the coast, some 100 miles north of Charleston. The old house is still standing, and, having withstood the storms of a century, is occupied in the summer months by a niece of Governor Alston. Here, during the war of 1812, Theodosia lost her only son, a most promising boy, twelve years of age, and the idol of his parents. The blow was a crushing one, and on the return of Governor Alston's younger brother from Yale College, as

soon as he entered her darkened chamber, she exclaimed, "Have you seen my father?" The writer only mentions this as an evidence of her great love for him. Her one desire now was to go to him in New York.

By the laws of Carolina, at the period I write of, no Governor could leave the State during his official term, but apart from this the existing war compelled him to remain, even if such a law had not existed. A long journey by land, which at this period would consume weeks, and in her present frame of mind was out of the question: so a pilot boat was fitted out for her, though this, too, was attended with great inconvenience and danger, as the British fleet was then lying off the "capes." The boat was deemed safe and seaworthy, and for ballast carried tierces of rice to defray expenses in New York, and so the heart broken mother, accompanied by several of her devoted servants, who refused to be left behind, sailed away forever from her Southern home, beloved by all who knew her. The captain of the vessel carried with him a letter from Governor Alston to the British Admiral, requesting under the circumstances a safe permit through the fleet to New York. The non-arrival of the vessel was, of course, a great source of anxiety, which became more intense as weeks and months passed, but for long and weary months all hope had not expired. The war was now over, Governor Alston had died, and no truthful intelligence had been received of the pilot boat or Theodosia till General Thomas Pinckney, a near connection of the family in Carolina, met at a dinner party in London the Admiral of the fleet already alluded to, who stated to him "that the letter of Governor Alston had been received and read by him and the request promptly granted, but that a very violent storm had arisen during the night and the fleet was scattered, and doubtless the pilot boat and all on board were lost." This was the first reliable information which had been received, and the family accepted it as absolutely true. Long years have now elapsed, and nothing more was heard of the ill-fated vessel save the newspaper fabrication alluded to, when in 1878 the following letter was received by Mrs. W. B. P., who inherited the old residence on King Street, Charleston, already mentioned

ELIZABETH CITY, N. C., July 28, 1878.

Dear Madam

I enclose you a photo of the painting I believe to be a portrait of Mrs. Alston. It has been sent to many of the relatives of Colonel

Burr in New York and elsewhere, who all see in it a strong resemblance, but as none living there recollect to have ever seen Theodosia, they cannot say positively if it is of her. We are fortunate and happy to have found in you one who knew Mrs. Alston and who now has a vivid recollection of her appearance. Be so good, after carefully examining it, to give me your impression and views. The history of this painting makes it almost certain that it is of Theodosia. The wife of Wheeler, the historian, of North Carolina, the daughter of the painter Sully, pronounced it to be clearly of her, as do also other artists who have seen it.

Yours respectfully,

W. G. POOL.

MRS. W. B. P.

Then the following account of the portrait is given:

#### THEODOSIA BURR

This lady took passage on the schooner *Patriot*, which crossed the Charleston bar (?) December 31, 1812. Until the last moments of his life, the husband was racked with the belief that the vessel had been captured by pirates. . . . The authority of the present clue is a gentleman of culture and fortune. Among a valuable collection of paintings in his private gallery is an original Theodosia Burr Alston, the possession of which came about as follows: Near Kitty Hawk, on the coast of North Carolina — now so sadly known as the scene of the loss of the *Huron* and the *Metropolis* in the winter of 1877-78 — lived an aged and weather-beaten pilot, who, taken sick, sent for a physician, and as the doctor had been successful in his treatment and was about to leave his patient, the latter said he "had no money, but would compensate him for his trouble when was able to work." The doctor remarked that there was something of his which he would like to have, unless it had some association which would render parting from it a sacrifice, and pointed to the portrait of a beautiful woman on the wall. The pilot did not value the picture, nor did he know who it was. The physician asked how he came into possession of it, and was told that years ago, on a night in January, 1813, after a storm of such force as was not remembered by the oldest people then living on the coast, several vessels were thrown ashore, and when the weather went down, so that he could head the breakers, he pulled off to one of

the vessels, a little schooner. Everything had been swept from her: books were scattered about, and in his search for some records of the vessel's destination, crew, and passengers, he came across a set of silver and that picture, and brought them away. A gentleman residing in the neighborhood of Kitty Hawk, during a second visit to Washington, happened to hear a conversation about Aaron Burr — to confirm the remark of Theodosia's beauty, a picture of the lady was produced. After his return to North Carolina he was visiting an old friend who was struck with the resemblance of a portrait hanging before him and the picture he had seen of Theodosia in Washington.

The writer in concluding an article already too lengthy will only add that the British Admiral's statement of his having passed the pilot boat through his fleet and the violent gale which followed the same night prove most conclusively that the boat was lost, and it is simply absurd to attach any importance to the "pirate story" in a fierce storm and in the midst of the British fleet. The boat may or may not have been cast ashore. The portrait may or may not have been that of Theodosia. The lady written to, with the hope of its being recognised, was a near and very dear relative of the writer, and was the youngest sister of Governor Joseph Alston, but was a little girl when Theodosia sailed from Charleston, and could not therefore trace in the photo sent her any resemblance. Of course the sailing of the *Patriot* on the 31st of December, 1812, and the date given by the old seaman in January, 1813, when he boarded the wreck, are worthy of credit, and had the name in the books, or even the letters on the silver, been preserved, the wreck of this particular vessel would have been established, but the writer rather inclines to the opinion of the British Admiral, that the little boat, heavily laden, had gone to the bottom with all aboard. Of course it was natural that the "story of pirates" was listened to, when the people of Charleston recalled the days when that harbor was the scene of such severe conflict with them — when Steed Bonnett, their leader, and forty of his crew were captured, and a number of women released who were found between decks. These pirates were all hanged and buried at the intersection of South and East Battery, Charleston, and the only one who showed the "white feather" was their captain, Steed Bonnett, an Englishman of education, who had to be dragged to the gallows in a fainting condition. The harbor of Charleston is noted as having been the scene of three great engagements: that of the piratical vessels under Steed Bonnett

and those of the Colony under Colonel Rhett, and here was fought, in 1776, the memorable battle of Fort Moultrie and the British fleet under Sir Peter Parker, and again in the great civil war, when for so many long and weary months Fort Sumter gallantly defended the city and prevented its capture. But this is a digression. Doubtless these historic forts will in future be called upon to defend the city from a foreign foe.

An engraving of Theodosia can be seen at the Corcoran Gallery among the St. Mémin collection.

J. M. A.

WASHINGTON, May 24, 1902.

This communication provoked a reply from Mr. Wm. L. Stone, which was printed in the same paper that contained J. M. A.'s original article.

Regarding your correspondent, "Mr. J. M. A.'s" extremely interesting letter to the *Times Saturday Review of Books* of to-day, I would say that I do not think he has made out his case. At the most he only throws doubt on the "pirate story." For example, the expression of the British Admiral, who at a dinner said that after he had received Governor Alston's letter a violent storm had arisen. . . . That doubtless the pilot boat was lost gives us nothing but the Admiral's conjecture. Had he said that he or his crew had seen the pilot boat go down, that statement would have ended all of this controversy; but, as I say, this was only his opinion. Now, for that matter, after the storm — and we may suppose that the pilot boat was staunch and seaworthy, as "J. M. A." says it was — a pirate may easily have intercepted the boat on which Mrs. Alston was; and again as it is well known that a pirate after capturing a vessel — unless the vessel is better than his own — either scuttles it or sends it adrift, after rifling it of its contents; therefore, why may not this schooner which, according to our friend, "J. M. A.," was thrown ashore, have, after the occupants had been forced to "walk the plank," drifted where it was found? Indeed, all that the old fisherman found was a picture, a silver set (perhaps overlooked by the pirates) and books thrown helter-skelter — just as pirates (having no use for books) would have been apt to do. But if the schooner was not captured, but had merely drifted ashore, certainly more would have been found



in her than a silver set, a picture, and books. At least some of the unfortunate crew and passengers would have been found below stairs, for they would not have come up on deck merely to be washed over.

Now, in contravention to the Admiral's dinner story — as I say, merely his conjecture — I send you a clipping from the *Mobile Register* of May 23, 1833:

The fate of Mrs. Alston, the accomplished lady of Governor Alston of South Carolina, and daughter of Aaron Burr, has been shrouded in mystery for more than twenty years. Occasionally, indeed, some gleams of light have been thrown around her melancholy end, and the belief is that she fell a victim to piratical atrocity. Some three years ago it was currently reported that a man residing in one of the interior counties of this State made some disclosures on his deathbed which went to confirm the confessions previously made by a culprit on the gallows, that the vessel in which Mrs. Alston sailed was scuttled for the sake of her plate and effects. The following article, which we copy from the *Alabama Journal*, goes to throw some additional light on the subject. The facts mentioned in it are new to us and will be probably to most of our readers:

#### CONFESSION OF A PIRATE

The public, no doubt, remembers the story of the daughter of Aaron Burr, who was the wife of Governor Alston of South Carolina. On the return of her father from Europe, about the year 1812, she embarked from Charleston (?) on a visit to him at New York, on board a privateer-built vessel, and was never heard of afterward. It seems that her friends at first thought that the vessel had fallen into the hands of pirates, and afterward concluded that it was wrecked and lost. It appears from the statement of a respectable merchant of Mobile that a man died in that city recently who confessed to his physician on his dying bed that he had been a pirate and helped to destroy the vessel and all the crew and passengers, on which Mrs. Alston had embarked for New York. He declared, says this gentleman, that after the men were all killed, there was an unwillingness on the part of every pirate to take the life of Mrs. Alston, who had not resisted them or fought them, and therefore they drew lots who should perform the deed, as it had to be done. The lot fell on this pirate, who declares that he effected his object of putting the lady to death by laying a plank along the edge of the ship, half on it and half off, or over the edge.

and made Mrs. Alston walk on that plank till it tilted over into the water with her. The dying pirate requested his physician to make this story public, but his surviving family will not permit or consent that the name of the deceased should be known.

The above tale was repeated over and over by the merchant before mentioned in the presence of a number of gentleman whose names can be given. He said he received it from the physician himself with no other injunction to secrecy than that he should not disclose the name of the physician for the present. On being asked if the physician was a man of veracity and respectability, he replied there was no one more so in Mobile. The merchant was warned that his story would get into the newspapers, to which he made no objection.

Now, certainly this precise statement should be placed against the Admiral's story, which, as I have said, was merely his opinion. Finally, I am under the impression that when "Babe" the pirate was taken, my father (the late Col. William L. Stone) visited him in his confinement and endeavored to procure from him a statement that he was the one who captured the schooner in which Mrs. Alston had taken passage, and while "Babe" refused to make any denial either pro or con regarding it, yet the very fact that my father endeavored to get from him a confession, showed what the general consensus of opinion was at that time. My father, as you are aware, was an intimate personal friend of Burr — hence his efforts to obtain the truth.

As your correspondent says, Theodosia was, indeed, a most lovely and cultivated woman, as two or three autograph letters from her to her father (in my possession) show. These letters were given my father by Burr.

WILLIAM L. STONE.

MOUNT VERNON, N. Y., June 3, 1902.

On June 4, 1902, J. M. A. wrote to the author of "Blennerhassett": "Your recent letter received . . . I fear the 'pirate story' will never cease. I thought I had made a clear statement. Suppose this pilot boat had not gone down in the gale off the Capes, but had been cast ashore off the coast of North Carolina. . . . Certainly no pirates would have left the picture behind."

A communication in reply to the preceding was answered on June 9.

Your esteemed favor received this A. M. Copy of *Boston Journal* was also received. . . .

Governor Joseph Alston was my uncle. He was the eldest son of Colonel William Alston, my grandfather. General Thomas Pinckney and my grandfather married sisters, daughters of Mrs. Rebecca Motte. My father, Colonel Thomas Pinckney Alston, gave me the history of the pilot boat and of Theodosia. You must remember in those days *all* this account was not published as is the fashion now. General Pinckney's account was accepted as absolutely true, and his family heard all the early accounts. 'The pirates' confessions, etc., only rendered the loss more painful and notorious. I feel some regret at having published the article in *The Times*, for it seems that the pirate story has taken such deep root that the gifted Theodosia's end would really be nothing without it, for I see in the last issue of *Saturday Book Review*, a writer says that the British Admiral did not *see* the boat go down. If in this life we had to see all things to believe, few of us would reach Heaven. I am in my 82d year, and I believe in much that I do *not* see.

Stimulated, no doubt, by a perusal of the "pirate story," a writer in the *Denver (Colo.) Post* of December 28, 1902, presented a new version of it with the caption -- "Claims to be Son of Aaron Burr and Half-breed Woman."

DETROIT, MICH., Dec. 27, 1902. — Charles Henry Burr Crosby, 108 years old, who resides with his son at 515 St. Antoine Street, in this city, has letters tending to show that he is the son of Aaron Burr. Vice-president of the United States during the first term of Jefferson. His story of Burr's last days is an interesting one and further confirms his claim of being the son of the famous lawyer.

When Burr came back to this country, Crosby says, after his duel with Hamilton, poor in health and with little left of his former fortune, he managed to exist on a meagre law practice. His wife had died when he met a woman of mixed Negro and Indian blood with whom he fell in love. The woman's father had been brought from Africa



Mrs. Rebecca Motte, connected, by marriage,  
with the Alston family.



as a slave. He was owned by Prince Henry, a wealthy slave-owner. Later, his wife, an Indian woman, purchased his freedom for \$300.

The new bride of Burr was a handsome woman, and for her position in life was fairly refined. Crosby says that he was their only son. He is well educated and can speak three languages. He was born in England, March 21, 1794, Burr having sent the woman there owing to a popular indignation against the union. The son returned to this country in 1809 with his mother.

When the son had grown to be a young man, his famous father died. His mother married a man by the name of Crosby, a liveryman in Philadelphia. Soon after the young man married Mary Ann Jackson, a woman of the same mixed nationality as his mother. She also is still alive at the age of 110. She lives with a daughter in Detroit, as the home of Othello Crosby is not large enough to accommodate both the old folks.

This strange old man tells a story which seems to throw light on the disappearance of Theodosia Burr Alston, his half-sister, whose mysterious fate has puzzled the world for almost a century. Theodosia Burr was considered one of the most beautiful and talented women in America.

She sailed from Charleston, (?) S. C., on the ship *Patriot*, for her father's home in New York. So much history knows. Her fate has been a mystery for which many solutions have been offered, but none susceptible of absolute proof.

Crosby shipped as cook on the sloop *Independence*. They had not been at sea long when they rescued two men on a raft. One was a white man, the other an Indian. When picked up they gave their names as Gibbs and Wamley. They said they they were shipwrecked merchants. As they were willing to work, they were permitted to remain on board, but when the sloop reached New York, they were turned over to the authorities as suspicious characters.

One night while Crosby was lying in his bunk in the forecastle, he overheard the two men talking. "Look and see if that cook's sleeping," said the white man, and the Indian declared he was. Then the two began to curse their hard fate. In the conversation that followed Crosby learned that they were shipwrecked pirates. The white man was disgusted with himself over something, and finally blurted out: "It's a shame we made that pretty gal walk the plank with the rest of the crew. We might have saved her."

Crosby knew they were talking of his half-sister, and when he reached New York, told his father, Aaron Burr, about Theodosia's death. Burr was then convinced that his daughter had been murdered. He located the pirates and prosecuted them until they were hanged, but never mentioned his daughter's name through the whole trial.

Anything more absurd than this could hardly be conceived. It has all the attributes of untruthfulness and historical impossibility. Mr. Crosby says he was born in 1794, the year in which Mrs. Theodosia Prevost Burr died. At that time, Colonel Burr was a Senator. Mr. Crosby says Colonel Burr did not marry his mother until after Burr's return from Europe, which was in 1812. Accepting both of Mr. Crosby's statements as correct, he must have been born at least eighteen years *before* Colonel Burr "met" his mother. As Colonel Burr did not die until 1836, this "reputed" son must have been at least 42 years of age at the time. Who the "she" is who "is still alive at the age of 110" it is impossible to learn from the context. If "she" is his wife, why should she live apart from her husband, and why did Charles Burr take the name of his mother's second husband, if his right name was Burr? And who are "both" the old folks?

As the Lowell (Mass.) News said on January 7, 1903, "Of course Crosby is entitled to a father. But Crosby must be more carefully on his guard against dates and details or they will hopelessly orphan him. Of course any charge is permissible against Aaron Burr. But there must be no assaults against impregnable and fixed dates."

The more the article is considered, it becomes less

ludicrous and more contemptible. It is only one of the hundreds of fabrications that have been printed about Colonel Burr, which, when examined, are found to be as mendacious as the one just cited, and which would not have been printed here had not the purpose of the writer been to present both *truth* and *untruth*, so that no charge of suppression of fact (?) could truthfully be brought against him.

Mr. L. L. Knight, the author of many interesting historical articles, in 1903 wrote one entitled "Aaron Burr and his Gifted Daughter Theodosia." It will be seen that he did not believe the "pirate story" (95).

Despite the fact that every effort was made to find some trace of the unfortunate vessel it was all fruitless. Some have supposed that the boat was captured by pirates, but there is little evidence to support the conjecture. Governor Alston, whose health was already undermined at the time of this tragic occurrence, survived the shock for only three years, dying in the summer of 1816; while Burr, whose sense of bereavement was no less acute, was fortified by an iron constitution which enabled him to bear his misfortune, and for more than two decades he continued to struggle with fate, yet never with the same glow of encouragement which once filled his heart, or with the same look in his eyes.

More crushing than the blow which hurled him from the high office of Vice-president of the United States and condemned him to public execration as one who had betrayed or sought to betray his country, was the grief which he felt over the mysterious loss of his daughter; and on more than one occasion, when his privacy was unexpectedly intruded upon, it is said that the tear-drops could be seen trickling down his cheeks as he clutched an open letter in his hands, showing the bitterness of the grief which he nursed in secret.

The following, published in 1905, is taken from a volume of stories and sketches by a resident of Elizabeth City, North Carolina (96):

The *Patriot* was lost during the winter of 1812. On the voyage



from Georgetown, S. C., to New York, it would pass the North Carolina coast. The sea at this time was infested by pirates. A band of these bold buccaneers may have boarded the little vessel and compelled passengers and crew to "walk the plank." Becoming alarmed at the appearance of some Government cruiser, they may, from motives of prudence, have abandoned their prize.

This theory is not mere conjecture. Years ago, two criminals executed in Norfolk, Va., are reported as having testified that they had belonged to a piratical crew who boarded the *Patriot* and compelled every soul on board to "walk the plank." The same confession was made years subsequently by a mendicant dying in a Michigan almshouse. This man said he would never forget the beautiful face of Theodosia Burr as it sank beneath the waves, nor how eloquently she pleaded for her life, promising the pirates pardon and a liberal reward if they would spare her. But they were relentless, and she went to her doom with so dauntless and calm a spirit that even the most hardened pirates were touched.

I cannot vouch for the truth of these confessions which have appeared from time to time in print; I only introduce them as collateral evidence in support of the banker woman's (Mrs. Mann) story. The *Patriot* was supposed to have been wrecked off the coast of Hatteras during a terrific storm which occurred soon after it set sail. This, however, was mere conjecture which has never been substantiated by the slightest proof.

It is not improbable that the *Patriot* during a night of storm, was lured ashore by the decoy lights at Nag's Head, and that passengers and crew fell into the hands of the land pirates in waiting, who possessed themselves of the boat and everything of value it contained.

This also, of course, is mere conjecture, but the all-important fact remains that a pilot boat went ashore at Kitty Hawk during the winter of 1812, and that in the cabin of this boat was a portrait of Theodosia Burr.

Articles headed "Old Painting Gives Clue to the Fate of Theodosia Burr Alston. Tends to Prove that Aaron Burr's Daughter was made to Walk the Plank by Lafitte's Crew," appeared in the New York

Herald of May 20, 1906, the Chicago Chronicle of June 3, and the Seattle (Wash.) Post-Intelligencer of July 1, accompanied by a picture showing Theodosia walking the plank, and a reproduction of the Nag's Head portrait said to resemble her.

A half-tone of the Nag's Head portrait was sent to a professor, a resident of Chapel Hill, N. C., who returned the following acknowledgment:

I thank you heartily for the picture of Mrs. Alston. She must have been a woman of vivacity, beauty, and distinguished appearance. We see these in her face. It seems to me improbable that she should have hung up her portrait in the cabin of her packet. I suppose you have seen the notice of the confession of a pirate in Wheeler's Reminiscences and elsewhere. My conclusion is that she was shipwrecked, and I prefer to believe that such was her fate.

Has the whole story been told? Has all the evidence bearing upon the subject been collected? Fortunately, there still remain some threads to be added to the skein of testimony. Whether they will be considered "confirmations strong as proofs of holy writ" must be decided by the reader after their perusal and comparison with the accumulated evidence already presented.

## CHAPTER XVI

### HER CONFESSED EXECUTIONER

**I**N one of the "pirate stories" already given, the name "Burdick" is mentioned. It also occurred in an article printed in the Chicago Tribune, on August 5, 1902, which was entitled: "The Fate of Aaron Burr's Daughter."

An old resident of Washington said in a recent conversation: "The fate of Theodosia, the beautiful daughter of Aaron Burr, has been one of the appalling mysteries of sudden disappearance at sea. She was married to Governor Alston of South Carolina, a name distinguished in the annals of that State. She sailed from Charleston (Georgetown) for New York in the ship *Patriot*, on December 30th, 1812, on a visit to her father. The vessel was supposed to have been either engulfed or captured by pirates, for it was thought that no soul had survived to determine the awful doubt as to its fate or that of its passengers. One account particularly arrested public attention, and that was the purported confession of a pirate, Dominique You, which Charles Gayarré incorporated into his brilliant, romantic, philosophic 'Fernando de Lemos.' It is so graphically drawn that many persons thought at last the fate of Aaron Burr's only daughter was known. An old sailor named Benjamin F. Burdick died recently a pauper in a Michigan poorhouse. On his deathbed he made the startling confession that he was one of the piratical crew that captured a vessel named the *Patriot* and participated in the murder of Theodosia Burr Alston at sea. Indeed, he declared that it fell to his lot to pull the plank from under her. She came forth arrayed in white, holding a Bible in one hand, and with heroic mien took her place on the slender instrument of death, and without a shudder or quiver of a muscle was precipitated into the sea. The noble, unblanched face, erect


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and airy form, he said, had haunted him all his subsequent life. The date of the vessel's loss, January, 1813, was correctly given by Burdick, and the name 'Odessa' Burr Alston was his only error; and yet this was not an error, for the name of both father and husband are sufficient identification. The corruption of 'Theodosia' into 'Odessa' would be natural to an ignorant sailor and, if anything, tend to prove that he had not been reading up to make himself a sort of deathbed hero. At any rate, the confession is plausible for the reason named."

To the young boy, stories of pirates and buried treasure have a great fascination. He has read of Captain Kidd who plied his nefarious calling from New York bay to the Gulf of Mexico, and the accounts of fabulous buried chests of gold and jewels which the most persistent search has failed to find. If now grown up, memory brings back to him what he read of Jean and Pierre Lafitte, who scoured the Gulf of Mexico with *La Belle Marie* and carried their ill-gotten plunder into Bayou Barataria and other inlets near the mouth of the Mississippi. He recalls how these same pirates became quondam patriots and aided General Jackson at New Orleans when Pakenham and Wellington's veterans, and Nelson's man Hardy, tested the temper and faced the rifles of our Western frontiersmen.

As one surveys the literature of piracy, what a galaxy of "heroes" is presented. Captain Teach, known as Blackbeard; daring Edward England and One-eyed Charlie Vane; Thomas Tew, Captain Avery, John Halsey, (born in Boston!) Captain Con-  
dent, Captain Bellamy, Captain Lewis, Sam Burgess, and Tom Howard; Captain Fly, who was hanged in Boston Harbor; Caracciotti, who with his entire band "died in their boots"; tender-hearted Thomas White, who would not rob innocent children; the celebrated

Sir Henry Morgan, and last and least the craven-hearted Steed Bonnett, who was dragged to the scaffold and expiated his crimes in Charleston Harbor (97).

After the publication of "Blennerhassett," its author was brought into an extensive correspondence with members of the Edwards and Burr families resident in all sections of the Union. Some wrote for information and others to supply it. One of his most valued correspondents was Mrs. Harriette  Clarke Sprague, of Dowagiac, Michigan. This lady, a niece of the late Mrs. Sarah J. Lippincott, known to the literary world as "Grace Greenwood," can refer to an exceptional Revolutionary ancestry. Her grandfather, Colonel John Clarke, was third cousin to Aaron Burr, and her grandmother Clarke was second cousin, once removed, to General Benedict Arnold. Mrs. Sprague has always been deeply interested in historical and genealogical studies, and the fate of Theodosia Burr was an engrossing theme. In her scrap books are collected all available information relative to the Edwards, Burr, and Arnold families, and they were placed at the disposal of the writer of this volume for use or verification.

Mrs. Sprague did not confine her interest to what others had done in the way of investigation, but prosecuted personal inquiries with a remarkable result. Among her acquaintances was a Mrs. Tice, also a resident of Dowagiac, which is in Cass County, Michigan. Mrs. Tice's mother, Mrs. Jay McComber, lived with her, and from Mrs. McComber, on January 6, 1903, Mrs. Sprague secured the revelation which follows:

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DOWAGIAC, CASS COUNTY, MICHIGAN.

CHARLES FELTON PIDGIN, *Councillor-in-chief*,  
AARON BURR LEGION,  
BOSTON, MASS.

Dear Sir:

On January 6, 1903, I called on Mrs. Jay McComber, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Tice, in Dowagiac, Cass County, Michigan, and Mrs. McComber related to me the following: "My name, when a girl, was Kezia Ingling. I was born in Jersey, New Jersey, in 1821. When a child, my parents moved to Michigan, taking me with them. I married Willard Hill in Brownsville, Mich.; later I married Jay McComber. While living in Brownsville, I became well acquainted with Frank Burdick. In 1848 he lived in his own house near us, and at that time, for six months, he took his meals at our house. He was a shoe cobbler. At the end of the six months he told us if we would move into his house and take care of him as long as he lived, he would deed me his house and lot. At that time he claimed to be 70 years of age, was in poor health, and suffered much from a sore leg, which he said was caused by a wound he had received in battle on board a pirate ship, of which he was one of the crew. At the time, he was taken prisoner with two others, the only survivors of the crew. We accepted his offer, and he deeded the place to me, reserving a life lease. He said he succeeded in escaping from his captors, taking with him several long knives, which he used while on the pirate ship. He had these knives with him when he lived with us, and I was always very

much afraid of them and him, when he would get them out. He lived with us a year and a half in his own house, and then his leg becoming very bad, the doctors thought he had better go to the County house and have it taken off there. He went, but only lived 24 hours after the operation. While living with us, he would have spells of talking with me about his life on the pirate vessel. He talked most of a beautiful woman they took off a ship they captured. He said her name was Theodosia Burr. They killed all of the crew but the Captain and one other man, bringing them aboard the pirate ship with the lady. The pirate Captain wanted to take the lady as his wife to his den, and gave the choice of that or death. She at once said she would die, but he insisted on her taking several hours to consider it. She asked to be allowed to go to the cabin alone to prepare for death, and he allowed her to go. At the end of the time she came out, dressed in white, with a blue ribbon at her throat. While she was in the cabin, the men pleaded with their Captain to spare her, and he told them they might talk with her and see if they could persuade her to consent to his wishes. When Burdick approached her, he said but two words, when she turned and said, 'get thee behind me, Satan.' The pirate Captain said she must walk the plank. Then she knelt and prayed for them all, for her loved ones, and for herself. Then she asked if any of them had the opportunity, to please send word to her father and her husband, and tell them of her fate, so they would not always be looking for and expecting her. She told them that her only child was dead. Then she stepped on the plank.

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walked a few steps, and turned toward them, raised her arms extended, and cried: 'Vengeance is mine saith the Lord! I will repay!' turned again and, with face uplifted, walked into the ocean. Burdick said he had been haunted with the vision ever since; he would see her in his dreams; that he could never see a woman in a white dress, that it would not bring it all back, and as he would talk, the tears would stream from his eyes, and he said he knew she would haunt him until his dying day. No act of his life was he so sorry for. The Captain and the other man were then made to walk the plank, and one of them cursed the pirates, and wished them a bad wish, which soon brought them to ruin, as the next fight they had, they lost, and all were killed but him and two others. He escaped, but he thought that one of the others was afterwards hanged. Frank Burdick told me this story many times, and I firmly believe he told the truth. He would sit and talk and cry for hours. He was always good to me and my little children, but I was always afraid of him. I do not think that he ever talked to any one about this part of his life, or told any one as much as he did me, and he only talked to me at times about it, as he feared. I have told Mrs. Sprague about this and she has written it out and read it over to me, and it is every word true." her

MRS. KEZIA x McCOMBER.  
mark

I have written this story as near in Mrs. McComber's own words as I could. I called on her this day and read it over to her, and she



signed it as above with her "mark," as she could not write.

HARRIETTE CLARKE SPRAGUE.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this day,  
February 14, 1903.

FREEMAN J. ATWELL,  
*Notary Public in and for  
Cass County, Michigan.*

In a letter accompanying the statement of Mrs. McComber, Mrs. Sprague wrote: "Enclosed please find Mrs. McComber's story as she told it to me. I could, perhaps, have expressed it better — more dramatically — but I thought it best to keep it, as far as possible, in her own simple language, which, considering the fact that she cannot write herself, is, I think, remarkably good. In relating the circumstances concerning Theodosia's 'walking the plank,' she acted it out, with extended arms, and uplifted face, as I dare say she had seen Burdick do. The old lady is in her 83d year, and it is remarkable that she could, and did, with her lack of education, tell so straight and coherent a story. I had several interviews with her, and although she repeated a good deal, she did not cross herself."

This is one thread in the skein of mystery. Men have been executed on the strength of circumstantial evidence much weaker than this. But there is more testimony of a cumulative nature to be added.

## CHAPTER XVII

### HER SILENT WITNESS

**I**N her book "The Eyrie," Miss Betty F. Pool, of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, gives a graphic description of the North Carolina coast near Kitty Hawk and Nag's Head (96):

The sand dunes of North Carolina have long been famous as the scene of marine tragedies. The bleaching ribs of some of the stateliest craft that ever plowed the deep bear testimony to the ravages of old ocean. The English merchantman, the Portuguese galleon, the Dutch brigantine, the Spanish treasure ship, the French corvette, the Norwegian barque, representatives of every maritime nation on the globe, are scattered over the beach, from Hatteras to Cape Fear, the grisly skeletons protruding from the sands like antediluvian monsters in some geological bed.

This narrow strip of sand, winding like a yellow ribbon between the inland sounds and the sea, presents a curious study to the geologist. For years it has been gradually sinking, and at the same time becoming narrower until now its average width is not more than a mile; and the libertine waters of the great sea not seldom rush across the frail barriers to embrace those of the Albemarle.

The slender divide has not always been able to withstand the matchless flood, which has, in times of unusual commotion, literally cut a pathway through the yielding sands. These form inlets, of which Oregon, Hatteras, and New are the most important. . . . Isolated from the world on this barren waste of shifting sand, the "banker" of a hundred years ago was almost a barbarian. His savage instincts not only made him consider all flotsam and jetsam his lawful property, but induced him to use every means to lure vessels ashore for purposes of plunder. And when a wreck occurred, the

wreckers held high carnival. The sparse population turned out *en masse* and with demoniac yells murdered without remorse the hapless victims who escaped the raging surf. Nag's Head, a favorite summer resort along the coast, was named from a habit the "bankers" had of hobbling a horse, suspending a lantern from its neck, and walking it up and down the beach on stormy nights, impressing the mariner with the belief that a vessel was riding safely at anchor. Through this device many a good ship has gone down and much valuable booty secured to the land pirates.

The "bankers" of to-day are different beings from their ancestors of a century ago. Fellowship with enlightened people has had a humanizing influence, and they are now good and useful citizens.

The North Carolina coast is provided with three first-class lighthouses, Hatteras, Whale's Head, and Bodys Island. Bodys Island is no longer an island. Nag's Head Inlet which formed its northern boundary, having been completely closed up by the encroaching sands. The dunes, for the most part barren of vegetation, have in some places a stunted growth of forest trees, and in others large marshes covered with a rank growth of coarse grass, on which herds of wild cattle and "banks ponies" graze.

A more hopeful view is taken of the productive possibilities of the "sand banks" by a writer on scientific topics (98).

There is no better type of the average man than the native North Carolina banker.

The possibilities of these islands are as yet undreamed of by their inhabitants and utterly unknown to the outsider, who visits only the most barren of them in the duck-shooting season.

The regaining of the shore strip by reforesting the sands, and the retention of the dunes that are devastating the meadow lands, would make of Hatteras Island, at least, a subtropical garden, where southern fruits and early vegetables once plentiful here might come into the market. The game still lingering among the wooded dunes would be greatly multiplied, and the herds of wild ponies now dwindling away would again increase in numbers. Then conservative lumbering could be added to the industries of the island.

It is also within the range of possibilities that the black beach





sands which are concentrated by wave action at a few points might be made to yield from their iron ores a return for the labor of gathering them.

Mrs. Pool, the widow of Dr. Pool, lived at Elkhart, Maryland, at the time Mrs. Drake visited her to inspect the portrait found at Nag's Head. Her daughter Anna married a Mr. Overman, and she now resides at Elizabeth City, N. C. The preceding information was received from Mrs. Drake on April 22, 1902.

On July 25, 1902, Mrs. Marie Matthew wrote from Georgetown, S. C., to Mrs. Drake:

It has been my good fortune during the summer to visit Mrs. John Pool Overman, at Elizabeth City, N. C., and to see the portrait of Theodosia Burr Alston in her possession. Mrs. Overman showed me your article published in the Journal descriptive of the circumstances attending the portrait, and by her kindly indulgence I had copies made of the portrait. These photos, I am sorry to say, do but poor justice to the lovely woman. Yet I am happy to have them. I am a North Carolinian, but at present reside in this State and in the neighborhood of the Alstons. Some members of this family are deeply interested in the history of the portrait, and I write to ask you to give me a couple of copies of your article, which Mrs. Overman thinks is by far the most authentic account and which may greatly add to the value of the photographs. I have often visited Nag's Head, and my mother knew Mrs. Mann and the "bankers" of that beach.

I shall consider it a great courtesy to receive copies of your article, and will give one at once to the Alstons who are so anxious to see it.

The writer of this volume did not enter into correspondence with Mrs. Matthew until late in 1903. A meeting of the Aaron Burr Legion was held July 14, 1903, at the City of Newark, N. J., the birthplace of Aaron Burr. A memorial was published in com-

memoration of the 147th anniversary of his birthday. and Mrs. Matthew acknowledged the receipt of a copy on January 20, 1904, she being then at her home in Edenton, N. C.

"I am delighted to receive the Burr Memorial. There is so much to be said for the grand man. I shall have an interesting letter to write you in a few days, with accounts of the wreck and the terrible fate of Theodosia, which I am sure are authentic. I will give you a synopsis of them, and if you see that they are valuable to you, I can get the statement *verbatim* from the person herself, with notarial certificate affixed. . . . I have been unavoidably delayed in sending the photo (Nag's Head picture) which I mail to-day."

On February 14, 1904, Mrs. Matthew wrote again from Edenton: "I will go to Elizabeth City as soon as the weather will permit. It is very cold and the snow is two inches deep, which is unusual for us. . . . It will give me great pleasure to aid you in this matter, and with Mrs. Overman's assistance, I am sure you will receive most valuable information."

Mrs. Matthew wrote from Elizabeth City on February 22, 1904:

"It affords me great pleasure to forward the enclosed articles from Mrs. Overman. I wish that you could meet her. The picture holds a strange fascination for all who see it. It is on an easel near my writing-table, and so vivid is the intelligence of its subject, that it almost speaks from its silent portal. Surely Mr. Hudson could secure a communication. I would love for it to be in the hands of a scientist.

"I return home to-night after a delightful sojourn of two days. The sun shines once more after a long siege of hard and trying weather.

"Accept my congratulations on your laudable efforts, and wishing you all success.

"Yours cordially,

"MARIE A. MATTHEW."

One of the articles referred to in the preceding contained copies of letters sent to Dr. William Gaskins Pool, the father of Mrs. Overman, relating to the Nag's Head portrait, which he considered to be that of Mrs. Theodosia Burr Alston. Dr. Pool received twenty-one letters, of which copies of three are appended.

"NEW YORK, June 17, 1878.

"My father agrees with me in the belief that it is Aaron Burr's daughter. She certainly has Aaron's eyes and the Edwards' nose.

"GEORGE B. EDWARDS."

"CHAPEL HILL, N. C., June 17, 1878.

"Colonel Wheeler is satisfied that yours is the portrait of Theodosia. His wife, an artist, pronounces my photo the same as her cut of Theodosia."

(The Col. Wheeler referred to is the historian, now a resident of Washington City. His wife, an accomplished sculptress, is the daughter of Sully, the portrait painter.)

Mrs. Mary M. Pringle, in a letter from her home in Charleston, says:

"CHARLESTON, S. C., July 17, 1878.

"An error has been committed in saying that Theodosia sailed from Charleston. She sailed from



Georgetown, near which place the Alston family homestead is situated."

In another letter of date August 6, 1878, the same Mrs. Pringle writes: "I *do* remember her beautiful eyes, and the eyes in the picture are really beautiful."

Before visiting Mrs. Overman, Mrs. Matthew wrote from Edenton on January 25, 1904: "I hope you will accept these gleanings which I have made from the most authentic sources — from people who have known these persons and their modes of living for sixty years — with the traditions handed down from their forefathers who made summer pilgrimages to Nag's Head. I have taken great care to follow explicitly the tales of my mother and aunt who have known the 'banker' families herein mentioned since 1846."

The time is long past, the scene is afar, when on that stormy night in 1812 the bankers gave the pirate's cry and they launched their boat on the shores of a narrow strip of land situated on the coast of North Carolina, 36 Lat. 74 Long., about 50 miles from Cape Hatteras, known as Nag's Head, and went out to a ship with torn sail and crippled hull buffeting the angry sea.

Forsaken, this vessel had but so short a time, not more than several hours since, been the scene of one of the foulest deeds recorded in the pages of practical history, one of the most inhuman events, greatest cruelties, the sacrifice of the innocent woman, the defenceless Theodosia, three famous in American memoirs, for her own strong personality, intelligent, brilliant, and charming, daughter of Aaron Burr, the shining light in American politics, soldier, statesman, counsellor, worshiper of wife and child, wife of General Alston, an able and proud representative of a long and honored family of famous men and women in the Palmetto State.

'Tis not necessary for my pen to re-introduce the pathetic story of the departure of the vessel *Patriot* from Georgetown Harbor, with its lone and beautiful passenger bound for New York, there to

welcome to his native soil her illustrious father, and to weep upon his bosom her mother's tears in anguish over the loss of her child; to breathe into his ear her undying love for him, and to plead that he shall now banish from his weary heart the loneliness of an exiled, persecuted life, and return to her home and be welcomed.

There is no doubt but that Theodosia is the woman whose fate may now be revealed by a chain of circumstances too true to dispute. So definitely reasonable are the details, that even the most incredulous may no longer live under the mysterious cloud which has hovered over her fate for years. Perhaps we are not the happier for knowing this truth, such horrible truth as it is.

Nag's Head is a noted little spot on the coast of North Carolina, a mile distant, as the sea-gull flies, from Roanoke Island, the haunt of the Creatans, the site of Sir Walter Raleigh's Fort, birthplace of the babe Virginia Dare, the earth whereon Bishop White, in 1584, knelt to consecrate a prayer of Thanksgiving to the God of the Universe, and shame it may be added, that the House of Bishops did not send an Apostle to preach on that spot again until Bishop Watson, of the Diocese of East Carolina, a visitor at Nag's Head three centuries after, in 1884, held service there.

There are contradictory accounts relative to the name of this strip of sand. The early mariners say that the shore from Kitty Hawk, late the scene of the Wright brother's experiments with the flying machine, to the Oregon Inlet, presents the appearance of a nag's head, the ears made prominent by the high sand hills. Possibly this is true, but more probably may the name be accepted from the fact that the natives, a crude and lawless set of people, affixed torches on long poles, mounted their native banker ponies, and walked the beach stormy nights to allure the ships nearer the shore. This is the local acceptance; in those days there were no light-houses near, none save the stars of the universe, the light of the angels' eyes.

The natives of Nag's Head are distinctly strange, something of a cross between various nationalities; an unprincipled people, piratical, superstitious, uncleanly and ignorant; the substantials of life consisting of fish and wild hogs and cattle, with but scant provisions of bread and vegetables. Grapes are indigenous, and except for a few fertile spots and the French Ponds, there is little else than sand, no one yet having found a rock upon which to build a temple. For generations summer visitors have been most kind to the ban-

kers, but to be rewarded by pillage of their homes in the winter months.

Among the bankers there have been for at least a century two famous families, the Neals and the Manns. There is no interpretation of these names; they simply took them in late years. The Manns were the conquering heroes, and the Neals the excavators of the graveyard. When a ship was stranded, the parties, natives, brought their booty ashore and buried it in the sand, and the old men sat to watch the location of the treasures, and oft in the darkness would follow the example of Gabriel Grubb and then, with stealthlike tread, the women would come to dig for the hidden treasures.

Since the war of the Confederacy, Dr. Pool, an eminent physician, and a resident of Elizabeth City, N. C., paid annual visits to his summer house on the banks. Mrs. Mann had been an invalid during the winter months, and after exhausting the virtues of witchcraft, drank a liberal quantity of stale water out of a gourd which had stood in the sun seven days, thrown over her left shoulder all the brooms of seaweed which it had been her fortune to gather on the shore after the winter storms, shaved the dog's tail to get the hair for blister wounds, and broke up the supply of flies in the vicinity of the sand banks to tie on her head to cure the fits, and decapitated all the black hens unfortunate enough to be black, to see if they would flutter after the vital organs were extracted, she concluded to send for Dr. Pool. Now follows the interesting portion of this preamble.

When Dr. Pool, accompanied by his little daughter, entered the hut, the most veritable hovel as it was, they both were attracted by the beauty of a weather-beaten portrait, which was suspended from a nail on the rough upright inside the door. The bright and piercing eyes of a young woman peered from behind the veil of cobwebs and around the mounds of fly-specks of many years, and searched for a glance of recognition from the visitors. The child, now Mrs. Overman, the possessor of the portrait, also felt the spell of a spirit speaking through her eyes on the canvas. Dr. Pool questioned Mrs. Mann, who, like Peter's wife's mother, "lay sick of a fever," and this is the story, as near as I remember Mrs. Overman's account, that she told. The English alphabet would refuse to attempt to spell her lingo.

"When the English was fighting us folks over here, I heard 'em say, and before me and Mann took one another to live with, the folks do, we all saw a ship out yonder" — she designated the

direction of the *Huron* stranded on that coast in the summer of 1877—"and he and the boys went out to her. When they came back they brought that picture and some trunks along with some other things, but the ship had been scuttled, and there wasn't much left. Some of those things in the cupboard came with them."—I cannot recall satisfactorily what these articles are, I think, though, some china and a piece or two of silver, but these are the authentic accounts as I had them from Mrs. Overman, who heard the banker woman. She also saw the contents of the cupboard. I do not question his faithfulness to his other patients, but his care for this one was overwhelming. He was most deeply interested in her recovery as well as the portrait. He offered to buy it, but no importuning would secure her consent: she refused most rigidly, although Dr. Pool resorted to hospitality and asked her over to spend the day with his family. She accepted and arrived in a tread cart, with her limbs—the size of a pipe for a number ten cook range, notwithstanding her recent illness, clad in knit stockings tied under the knee,—dangling in mid-air. The tread wagon was filled to a tight squeeze, and when she emerged therefrom, to the dismay of the household, she stood before them, in stature six feet tall, and forty-seven bust, attired in a beautiful black satin gown, made for a gentlewoman, short waist, the skirt hemmed onto a corded belt, which deficiency of length was supplied with a ravelling from a tarred rope, low neck, and short sleeves, with under-garment of coarse homespun from the loom on Roanoke Island, and a cassock of similar goods to piece out the length. She announced at once that the dress came off the same wreck with some more clothes. So graciously was she toasted that day, and so magically did the Pool family mix her draughts, that before her departure she presented the Doctor with the coveted portrait.

As it hangs in Mrs. Overman's parlor now, it is lovely, certain lights upon it reveal an auburn tinge in the hair, and the gown was evidently white. The eyes are piercing, and the face wonderfully distinct, even after all these years. It is about twenty-seven inches by thirty, painted on wood, the picture held in the frame by wrought hand-made nails; the frame is old and quaint, nothing remarkable, but the whole corresponds to many portraits exhibited at the Charleston Exhibition, which were in truth genuine portraits of the Alston family exhibited by the present owners. I even tried to get one of these owners, a woman so cultivated and intelligent, to give

room for this mysterious portrait, but with no avail. I could not realize such utter want of curiosity. With such testimony in evidence, it is beyond all doubt, in my mind, that this is the true portrait of the beautiful daughter of Aaron Burr. Such a fate! Such a life to lose! Such mystery to cloud her pathetic end. 'Tis true, and a pity it is 'tis true, that even though the spark of light be kindled, that not one of those patriotic men of South Carolina seem to desire to accept this solution. I sent photographs to several members of the Alston family, and was amazed when I received no responsive favor in its behalf.

I know the woods of "Windsor," one of the Alston homesteads, which I am glad to say is still owned by a member of the Alston family, and have several relics from the chase over the fields and through the woods of that venerable old home. It is one of the most picturesque in all that vicinity, with its mammoth oaks draped to the ground with gray moss, a turf of a hundred years over the grove, with the rice fields so fertile and rich in their bounty far stretching over the river (Waccamaw) which runs by the foot of the yard. The house is grand, with tall columns from the ground, a modified structure of Grecian and local design.

With kindest regards,

Yours cordially,

MARIE ARMISTEAD MOORE MATTHEW.

The sworn statement from Mrs. Overman is next presented.

ELIZABETH CITY, PASQUOTANK COUNTY, N. C.,  
February 22, 1904.

MR. CHARLES FELTON PIDGIN,  
*Boston, Mass.*

It affords me exceeding great pleasure to address you this letter, both for myself and in memoriam of my father, the late Dr. William Gaskins Pool, of "Eyrie," our homestead in Pasquotank County, who went to his rest after a long and useful life, in March, 1887.

In the summer of 1869, my father took his family



Mrs. Theodosia Burr Alston. From the Nag's Head  
Portrait.

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to Nag's Head in search of the sea breezes, so grateful after the parching suns of Pasquotank. As it appears on the map, this narrow strip of sand land lies 74° Long. 36° Lat., 50 miles from Cape Hatteras, a coast treacherous to mariners in consequence of shoals extending far out to sea. He was called professionally to the "banker" woman, Mrs. Mann. To all appearances, as they kept no exact dates, she was about 70 years old. I accompanied my father, and entering the rude house, constructed mostly of timbers from wrecks, and thatched with reeds and oakum, our attentions were attracted to a beautiful picture hanging against the rough wall, in dimension 18 x 20 inches, of a beautiful young woman about twenty-five years of age. The house was not clean, and the rafters and portrait were festooned with cobwebs of many seasons. Questioning Mrs. Mann very closely concerning her strange possession, these are the facts she told:

Some years before her marriage (which, however, was not entered into by legal form) to her first husband, one Tillett, a pilot boat came ashore near Kitty Hawk, two miles up the beach, north; her sails were set and rudder fastened. Tillett, with other bankers, boarded her. Not a soul was on the boat. They found in the cabin the table set for breakfast; for this they gave the reason that the berths were not made up and the cabins were in disorder, yet there was no trace of blood to indicate a scene of violence. From this wreck they brought many things, but so many years had elapsed that she said she knew of nothing left except what Tillett, her husband, gave to her. She had an old black trunk opened and



showed us two soft black silk dresses and a lovely black lace shawl. The dresses were certainly the apparel of a gentlewoman, small of physique. The dresses were very full skirts gathered into a low-cut bodice, with short sleeves. One of the dresses she afterwards wore to our house, which she had mutilated by inserting a long, black homespun gore in the back to enable her to meet it in front, the lace shawl pinned across her shoulders with a long, steel hair pin. 'Tis needless to add that the hem of her garment had great antipathy to her clodhopper shoes. The contents of an old beaufet also exposed to our view a vase of wax flowers under a glass globe, and a shell beautifully carved in the shape of a nautilus. These were all the relics in her possession which had survived the ravages of many years. My father questioned her closely concerning the details and dates. She said it was before she was married to Tillet, when the English were fighting us on the sea. She knew it was when there was a war, because the wreckers had booty from war vessels, and she had heard the summer folks say so. A few old families from this section went down to Nag's Head on sailing vessels, since, probably, before the Revolution. It is now quite a resort. My father calculated the dates to tally. In 1869 she was certainly 70 years old. This would make her fourteen in 1813. She said she was married to Tillet when she was a young girl — more than likely when she was sixteen. The bankers, even to-day, are most singular in their habits, and generally marry, though now by legal and sometimes by church service, at fifteen and sixteen. My mother, Mary Savnia Pool, exam-

ined the dresses and said they were homespun silk. Certainly, I have never seen anything like them. Remarkably well preserved for the long time, but as the banker woman said, they had stayed in the trunk and were aired only on state occasions, possibly half a dozen times since her marriage with Tillett.

The coloring of the portrait, though very much worn, is still very good. The hair is tinged with auburn, eyes piercing black, lips and cheeks pink. The dress is white. This handiwork of a master is painted on wood, and the mysterious beauty of the face seems to speak from a strange, invisible source, "Will you doubt me more?" It is held in what was once a plain gilt frame, with but a small beading on the inner edge, those handsome gilt nails having but once, when in search of some obscure name to prove its identity, been taken from the setting. A tarnished brass ring on the upper edge, by which it may be suspended, completes this most interesting relic from the abandoned vessel. With the accompanying photographs, the public may draw its conclusions as whether or not I have the portrait of the beautiful, but ill-fated, daughter of the giant statesman, Aaron Burr. Strong are the conclusions of great and able minds that such be true, and in pathetic love for the long perished gentlewoman, the grief-stricken mother, the faithful wife, and adoring daughter, I lay bare this authentic account; "Lest we forget, Lest we forget." American historians are powerful workers and they will yet pry open the sealed vaults wherein there are treasures of data, and reveal to the world that Aaron Burr was not a

traitor, a murderer, nor a terror to the morals of humanity.

Accept my high appreciation of your efforts.

I remain,

Yours cordially,

(Signed) ANNA L. OVERMAN.

NORTH CAROLINA, PASQUOTANK COUNTY.

This day personally appeared before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public, in and for said County and State, Mrs. Anna L. Overman, who, being duly sworn, says, that the statements contained herein are true and correct to the best of her knowledge and belief. This February 23d, 1904.

[Seal]

(Signed) M. B. CULPEPPER,

*Notary Public.*

The contents of this chapter form the second thread in the skein of evidence. The remaining ones are the portraits of Theodosia, by well-known artists, the Nag's Head portrait, and portraits of members of the Burr family, now living, which are held to have such marked features in common as to prove the validity of the portrait taken from the derelict vessel by the North Carolina bankers nearly a century ago.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### HER PORTRAITS

**T**HE American Library Association has in contemplation the publication of an "Index to Portraits"<sup>1</sup> found in books, newspapers, or magazines. The list which follows was partially compiled from proof sheets furnished by Mr. W. C. Lane, Librarian of Harvard University, together with additions based upon information in the possession of the writer.

The first portrait of Theodosia was undoubtedly painted by the celebrated Gilbert Stuart. Burr was not satisfied with it, for he criticised it severely in a letter to his daughter which is given in a previous chapter.

A gentleman, a resident of New York City, in a private letter of date December 27, 1904, wrote: "Our family has a painting by Stuart of Theodosia Burr — Mrs. Alston."

On January 10, 1905, the same gentleman wrote, in reply to a request for a photograph of the portrait: "The family have replied that they preferred not to allow picture removed from house, as it is frail, and they would rather not take chances. If a flash-light of picture would suit you, you might have it. After reading your second letter, I have thought that you might not want this copy, as I have always under-

<sup>1</sup> Issued in 1907.

stood that the picture of Theodosia Burr in Parton's 'Life of Burr' was a copy of this picture."

The portrait of Theodosia, of which a steel engraving appears in Parton's "Life of Burr," was not painted by Stuart, but by John Vanderlyn, a protégé of Colonel Burr. The Stuart portrait was painted when she was a young girl, before her marriage. In Harper's Magazine (1864) three portraits of Theodosia were given, dated, respectively, 1796, 1797, and 1802. That for 1802 is the Vanderlyn portrait, painted in 1802. That dated 1796 must be a copy of the Stuart portrait, as a perusal of a communication in the New York Times Saturday Review of July 12, 1902, will undoubtedly convince the reader.

#### A PORTRAIT OF THEODOSIA BURR

The letters in recent numbers of the New York Times Saturday Review of Books, in reference to Theodosia Burr's sad fate, recalls an examination I once made of an old oil-painting supposed to be the portrait of Aaron Burr's unfortunate daughter. When I saw the portrait it was a valued possession of a Miss Edwards, a lineal descendant of Jonathan Edwards. The painting portrayed a very sweet and interesting young girl. She was seated, her head bent slightly forward. Her hair hung in curling tresses over her shoulders, and was cut in a straight line across her forehead. This latter point I noticed particularly because this was the prevailing fashion of the day for young girls' and children's hair, and it seemed curious to find the same style in a portrait which evidently dated from a previous generation. The face had a gentle, almost pathetic beauty. An air of unconscious grace was noticeable in the pose. Seeing my interest in the picture, Miss Edwards related its history. As nearly as I can remember now, after the lapse of a number of years, it was as follows:

Her father, when a young man, while calling upon his relative, Aaron Burr, was shown a recently completed portrait of his cousin, Theodosia. Upon his inquiry as to the artist, Burr answered, in an off-hand manner, "Oh, Stuart." He did not say Gilbert Stuart,



John Vanderlyn, a protégé of Col. Aaron Burr, who became a celebrated painter.



however, so there remained some doubt as to whether the portrait had actually been painted by the famous artist. Many years afterward, in what was then the far West, Judge Edwards, in some obscure spot and in some peculiar manner, happened upon an old oil-painting. It was so discolored by time and hard usage that it was impossible to discern the subject. Out of curiosity he had the painting restored. To his astonishment, it proved to be the very portrait of his cousin, Theodosia Burr, which he had seen under such different circumstances many years before. The mystery of its travels was never solved. This is the story as I remember it. As I was little more than a child when it was told me, it is not impossible my memory may deceive me in some particular, but my recollection of both picture and story is very vivid.

MARY SNOWDEN EASTLY.

BABYLON, N. Y., June 27, 1902.

As will be seen by an examination of the portrait dated 1796, published in Harper's Magazine, the arrangement of the hair is the same as described in Mrs. Eastly's letter to the Times. The three pictures (1796, 1797, and 1802) also appeared in Charles Burr Todd's "The Burr Family," published (second edition) in 1891, facing page 112.

John Vanderlyn painted Theodosia's portrait in 1801 or 1802. In 1801 Colonel Burr wrote to Thomas Morris: "Mr. Vanderlyn, the young painter from Europe, who went about six years ago to Paris, has recently returned, having improved his time and talents in a manner that does very great honor to himself, his friends, and his country. From some samples which he has left here, he is pronounced to be the first painter that now is, or ever has been in America" (99).

The article in the magazine says further: "It was at this time that he painted the portraits of Colonel Burr and his daughter (*both profile likenesses*) from



which are copied the engravings prefixed to Davis's 'Life of Burr.' On December 4, 1802, Burr wrote to his daughter: 'Vanderlyn has finished your picture in the most beautiful style imaginable.'" The picture dated 1802 in Harper's Magazine is identical with the steel engraving in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr" and Parton's "Life of Aaron Burr."

An engraving of Theodosia was made by the French artist Charles B. J. F. de Saint Mémin. The original is in the possession of Hampton L. Carson, Esq., of Philadelphia. (See frontispiece to this volume.)

The publications in which copies of portraits or engravings of Theodosia have appeared, are as follows:

GILBERT STUART: Harper's Magazine (1864), and Charles Burr Todd's "The Burr Family" (second edition, 1891).

JOHN VANDERLYN: Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr" (1837); Parton's "Life of Burr" (1858 and 1867).

CHARLES B. J. F. de SAINT MÉMIN: St. Mémin Collection of Portraits (1862); McClure's Magazine (1902); The Aaron Burr Memorial (1903); Appleton's Magazine (July, 1906), and the present volume.

St. Mémin made his drawings and engravings in 1796 and 1797, probably from the Stuart portrait, and the pictures in Harper's Magazine are undoubtedly from the Mémin engravings, though poorly done, comparatively, in woodcuts. This assertion seems to be substantiated by the fact that in the Stuart portrait, as described by Mrs. Eastly,



Mrs. E. M. Miller.



and in the St. Mémin engravings, the hair hangs down the back and is cut straight across the forehead, and covers the ears, while in the Vanderlyn portrait his Parisian teaching is shown by the French costume of the period, and a simulation of a "liberty cap" on the back of the head, an addition which was surely not an American fashion, even for those who admired the French nation and hated England. Vanderlyn was an artist, and as the Jeffersonian Republicans (of which Colonel Burr was one) liked and sympathized with the French, he symbolized the friendship of the two nations in his portrait of Theodosia. The Vanderlyn portrait was, without doubt, the one that accompanied Colonel Burr in his European travels. Burr in his Journal mentions the fact that he asked Vanderlyn to "touch up" the picture while he was in Paris. It had been rolled and unrolled so often, that the paint was probably cracked; when in Sweden, hung up in Breda's studio, Burr wrote in his Journal that the picture seemed faint in comparison with the Swedish artist's gorgeous coloring.

The article in Appleton's Magazine for July, 1906, entitled "The Portraits of St. Mémin," was written by Mr. Charles Kasson Wead. Though finely illustrated, it contains several errors: Governor Alston's name is spelled with two "l's," when only one should have been used. The painter, who belonged to another branch of the family, spelled his name with two—Washington Allston. Mr. Wead states that Theodosia sailed from Charleston, which should be Georgetown; he also gives the date of sailing as December, 1813, instead of December 30, 1812.

It will be recalled that the maiden name of Colonel Burr's mother-in-law was Ann Stillwell. The following letter, of date October 10, 1901, from a member of the Stillwell family, gives some interesting information as to the present location of some of the original portraits of Colonel Burr and his daughter Theodosia.

As I lay aside your book, "Blennerhassett," I determine to thank you for your defence of Aaron Burr and to express the hope that I may have the pleasure of meeting you before long. Colonel Burr's mother-in-law was Ann Stillwell, she who successively married Mr. Bartow and Mr. De Visme, and who resided with her daughter Mrs. Prevost, at the time of her marriage to Mr. Burr. In my family, where his life was well known, he had his detractors yet some champions. Among the latter I class myself. The pursuit of information relating to him and his daughter brought me in contact with those who had known him personally, or those who were otherwise exceptionally informed. His last law partner was Colonel Wm. Dusenbury Craft, who was in his extreme age under my professional care. His admiration for Burr and his knowledge of him were equally great. The authoress, Mrs. Ann Stevenson, who befriended Mrs. Webb, his last friend, and who succeeded to Burr's effects through Mrs. Webb; the Borowson family, who served Burr in the capacity of coachman and cook, and who advanced him money when indicted by the Grand Jury for the killing of Hamilton, and who subsequently kept his effects; Mrs. Minthorne Tompkins, who Burr, in his will, made guardian of one of the two daughters he named; the family of his illegitimate son, Aaron Columbus Burr; members of the Edwards family; all these and others I have met and gleaned from. The result has been much information and the original portraits of Burr and his daughter, Theodosia, to the number of five, and photographs of others to the number of eight, as well as one of Mr. and Mrs. Blennerhassett. I can conceive it would interest you to see them, and surely it would please me to show them to one who has so kindly spoken for the original.

The statement has been made, but without authentication, that Borowson, Colonel Burr's coachman,



Miss Margaret M. Smith, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Smith.



took a picture of Theodosia out West with him, and that this picture was the one referred to by Mrs. Eastly as being found and restored by Judge Edwards. Colonel Burr did not like the Stuart picture, but admired that by Vanderlyn, and when he went South, took the one that he prized the most. In no way did Colonel Burr refer to the St. Mémin engraving, which is, apparently, an idealization of the Stuart portrait.

In reply to an inquiry regarding the portraits of Theodosia, a member of the Edwards family wrote:

The Theodosia Burr Alston watch is at my home in North Carolina. . . . Some member of the family of Judge Ogden Edwards, son of Pierpont Edwards, may be able to give you information in regard to Mrs. Alston's portraits. His son, Ogden Pierpont Edwards, had a portrait of Theodosia Burr Alston which I heard was stolen (cut out of frame) while his family was absent from their home in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

In the New York Times Saturday Review of July 13, 1901, two correspondents considered the question as to whether original portraits of Theodosia were in existence. One maintained that none were to be found. This opinion is, however, rendered untenable from the fact that at least three originals do exist, and perhaps more. The Stuart portrait, painted when she was a young girl, is said to have been in the possession of Judge Edwards of Staten Island. The St. Mémin engravings (two in number) are owned by the Corcoran Gallery of Art at Washington, and by Mr. Carson of Philadelphia.

The Vanderlyn picture is probably in the collection of a member of the Stillwell family living in New York City.



The second correspondent said: "Of the two portraits by him (St. Mémin) of Miss Burr, the one engraved in 1796 is from life; the one engraved in 1797 'Dexter' states was engraved after a painting by Vanderlyn when Miss Burr was about nine or ten years of age, an original being, in 1862, in the possession of Judge Edwards of Staten Island."

The preceding statement is not borne out by well-known facts. Theodosia was but thirteen years of age in 1796 when St. Mémin is said to have engraved her portrait "from life." Certainly the handsome young woman portrayed by St. Mémin was not a child of thirteen. The one engraved by St. Mémin in 1797 could not have been from the Vanderlyn picture, for that was not painted, as Colonel Burr's letter to his daughter proves, until 1802, when she was a married woman in her twentieth year. Besides, Miss Burr was ten years old in 1793, and the earliest date of a pantograph portrait by St. Mémin was 1796.

The many conflicting statements concerning Theodosia's portraits are due, no doubt, to the fact that the present possessors of them are not particularly desirous of having them photographed. The pictures are very old and, as one owner says, "frail." Another owner is willing to exhibit them under certain conditions, but does not care to have them photographed. Under these circumstances, the historian can only state facts as his excuse for not presenting reproductions of portraits known to be in existence. Enough, however, have been shown for purposes of comparison with the so-called Nag's Head portrait.



Mrs. Caroline Edwards Drake Bailey, 4th cousin to  
Theodosia.

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Too much reliance should not be placed upon facial resemblances. There are numbers of instances of "doubles" not members of the same family — in fact, not related at all. There are twins who look alike, and twins who do not resemble each other in any way. To Mrs. Stella E. P. Drake's powers of perception and persistency the comparison between Theodosia's portraits and the Nag's Head picture is due, and also, to a certain extent, the resemblances between Theodosia's portraits, the Nag's Head picture, and the portraits of some members of the Edwards family. It becomes necessary, then, to present these latter in order, that the reader may make comparisons and draw his own inferences.

The Salt Lake City (Utah) Herald of November 11, 1902, contained the following in relation to one of the compared likenesses:

The Salt Lake woman whose photograph furnished the missing link in the chain of proof of the tragic fate of the beautiful Theodosia Burr is Mrs. E. M. Miller of 1029 First Street, one of the city's prominent club women. Mrs. Miller has been prominent in society circles of the city for ten years, and her striking resemblance to pictures of her famous distant cousin has been the source of no little comment among her friends who knew of family genealogy. Although Mrs. Miller has for years past been assisting her sister, Mrs. Stella Pierpont Drake of Boston, to gather information that might lead to the solution of the fate of Theodosia Burr, she has said nothing about her part of the work until yesterday, when, after reading the *Herald's* story of the historic tragedy, she made her identity known and related to a *Herald* representative some interesting facts about the mystery of a century.

Mrs. Miller, in telling her story yesterday, stated that after her sister, Mrs. Drake, learned of the portrait found on board the stranded vessel, and coupled with it the nursery story of the dying pirate's confession, she wrote to her sister here and told her of this portrait.

"I dressed myself and my hair in the fashion shown in this old portrait, a description of which my sister sent me," said Mrs. Miller, "and had my picture taken, showing a profile view of my face. I sent this picture to my sister, and it was that picture which she compared with the old portrait found on the vessel and proved its authenticity by the striking family resemblance. She wrote to me as soon as she had compared the pictures and told me the result, but I intended to say nothing about it until I saw the story this morning. From putting together the facts of the likeness between the pictures, my undisputed relationship to Theodosia Burr, and the dying pirate's confession, my sister and I are both convinced that the secret of that tragedy of nearly a century ago has been cleared up."

Mrs. Miller traces her relationship to the famous American beauty of a century ago through a straight line of descent from the grandfather of Theodosia Burr. The family tree begins with Jonathas Edwards, whose daughter was the mother of Aaron Burr. Timothy Edwards, the brother of Aaron Burr's mother, was the father of Edward Edwards, the great-grandfather of Mrs. Miller. His daughter, Mary Edwards, married James McKinney, and their daughter, Kate Gray McKinney, married Addison Tuttle Drake, who was Mrs. Miller's father. This makes Mrs. Miller a cousin of Theodosia Burr, removed five generations.

Mrs. Stella E. P. Drake and Mrs. Catherine Drake Herbert, sisters of Mrs. E. M. Miller, bear the relation of fourth cousin to Theodosia, while Mrs. Elizabeth Miller McCullough is removed one more degree.

Those who believe that the Nag's Head picture is a portrait of Mrs. Theodosia Burr Alston are satisfied with their discovery, because, in their opinion, that belief substitutes a certainty for mere surmise. Coupled with the pirate's confession and Mrs. Mann's narrative, in their minds the chain of evidence is complete.

Accepting their contention, what are the strongest features in the way of argument to support it?



Theodosia, from the Portrait by Vanderlyn.



Mrs. F. M. Miller, of Salt Lake City, 4th cousin to Theodosia, dressed in imitation of the Vanderlyn Portrait of Theodosia.



Mrs. Mann's story being accepted as true, the facts are established that the vessel did not founder, and that "the portrait" was in its cabin, and was brought ashore, with articles of feminine wearing apparel, by the "bankers." Presumably this apparel belonged to the original of the picture.

It the vessel did not founder, but was found deserted, the idea of capture by another vessel presents itself. If captured by a British war vessel, some record would have been found before this in government reports. If so captured, the vessel would not have been abandoned, but put in charge of a prize crew, unless it was not navigable. If the passengers and crew had been captured by a British vessel, they would have been heard from as prisoners of war. No such record exists in England, and pirates never kept them.

If the *Patriot* foundered at sea, the story is a simple one, and all surmises and arguments are futile. If the *Patriot* was boarded by Tillett and his men, as the former Mrs. Tillett told Dr. Pool, then the field is wide open for either conjecture or evidence. No trace has been found of passengers or crew. It must be assumed, then, that they died. If at the hands of pirates (or bankers), perhaps shot and thrown overboard; or killed by cutlasses; perhaps made to "walk the plank," a less disfiguring death than to be shot or sabred. It is for those who do not coincide with this conclusion to present their side of the argument.

There is a weak link in the chain of evidence. Burdick, who confessed his crime, makes no statement as to what became of the vessel they captured



— the *Patriot*. He does say, however, that the pirate crew to which he belonged was beaten in its next fight, and only he and one other escaped. Tillett said the vessel was scuttled, but, owing to the storm, perhaps, the work of destruction was not completed, and the vessel did not sink. It must have sunk later, or Tillett and his band would have run it ashore and still further despoiled it.

But the strongest feature of the argument is still to be presented. *If the Nag's Head picture is not a portrait of Theodosia, whose portrait is it?* Plenty of time has certainly elapsed in which her relatives or friends could have established her identity. To be sure, it was nearly forty-seven years after the loss of the *Patriot* before the portrait was discovered, but if the vessel looted by Tillett and his band was not the *Patriot*, what vessel was it, and why was not some mention made in the papers of the day that another vessel besides the *Patriot* was lost at that particular time and in that locality? There is one great satisfaction — one feeling of inexpressible relief — given by the pirate's confession. Theodosia did not live to be dishonored, but died as she had lived, a pure woman — daughter, wife, and mother.

What more natural than for her to have her portrait painted as a surprise for her father? She knew that the one he had with him on his travels was cracked by continual rolling, and he had written in his Journal that it had faded. The artist's name is not deciphered on the portrait. Some of the finest poems in the language have been written by "Anonymous." Why not a portrait from a similar source? Theodosia knew she could only pay her

father a visit, and the new portrait would show her as she was despite four years of sickness and nervous anxiety.

Tillett says the pilot boat was scuttled. Who did it? Either sea pirates or land pirates. Was any other pilot boat lost at the same time? Has anyone else claimed the portrait? For a generation the papers have been active in spreading the news concerning this portrait. Has any one come forward to claim that the portrait was that of any one else than Theodosia?

It is necessary to take the "pirate story" and the "picture story" together. Either cannot be accepted or rejected without reference to the other. The "picture story" is much the stronger evidence — but it must be considered as confirmatory of the confession. The resemblance between the portrait and living persons served its purpose as a clue — but its value ended there. Without Burdick's confession and Mrs. Mann's statement, it would not be considered as conclusive. But we have the confession, the statement, and the resemblances — and nothing in rebuttal but unsupported negation. Belief is a matter of faith — but facts are stubborn things to be met by facts, and not by simple disbelief.

Why is it that persons who would consign a fellow-being to the electric-chair on much less conclusive testimony, refuse to accept the result of these wonderful coincidences?

## CHAPTER XIX

### REMEMBRANCES

**T**HE most American of our holy days is "Memorial Day," when, both North and South, soldiers decorate with flowers the graves of the deceased comrades in arms. Of late the heroes the Navy have not been forgotten, and flowers thrown upon the water in memory of those who gave their lives for what they deemed a sacred cause. The tributes of honor are swept out to the boundless ocean, carrying their message of love — a word requiem for the departed heroes.

Theodosia found a grave in the Atlantic Ocean but we cannot, at this time, cast flowers upon water to perpetuate the memory of one so sanctified by suffering. We can, however, bring together kind, the loving, and appreciative words that have been spoken or written about her as a woman embracing those great periods in her life — maid, wife, and mother. These flowers of thought, incense of near a hundred years, we will place upon her unknown grave. These remembrances shall our tribute to her memory. All that has been said or printed cannot be given here, but it is through the varying shades of sentiments of appreciation well represented. A thought may be conveyed many forms of word expression, but the thought the same, whether it is prose or in poetic form.



Theodosia - - from Charles Burr Todd's "The Burr Family,"  
by permission of Harper & Brothers.



Edward Edwards, son of Timothy and Rhoda Ogden  
Edwards - - first cousin to Col. Aaron Burr.

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"The sea's a thief," but when it shall give up its dead, it will yield no purer soul than that of Theodosia. She was the first educated gentlewoman of her time, and it is no small glory to have been the father of such a woman.

Deprived of a mother's love at that age when she most needed that parent's affection and gentle guidance, she was supremely fortunate in having a father whose heart beat strongly for his child, and who took charge of her education with the earnest purpose to make her a self-reliant, independent woman instead of a votary of fashion.

French, Greek, Latin, history, and mathematics were generously mingled with a thorough knowledge of woman's home duties, and the physical expansion that comes from out-door sports. At fourteen she took her mother's place at her father's table and entertained his guests with her wit and wisdom, and charmed them with her feminine graces.

Wedded to wealth, good family, and refinement, she gained new laurels both as wife and mother. Faithful to all marital ties, she ever retained an absorbing love for her talented, but politically and socially, unfortunate father. Ever ready to aid or defend him, that defense was based upon an unquenchable, filial affection which would have braved obloquy, prison bars, even death itself, for the one she loved.

No one can read her letters to her father, or that sad one to her husband when she thought that death was nigh, without being convinced that her father, though he may not have been a religious teacher, had never tried to implant in her breast that saying of the fool, "There is no God."

Bowed down by the death of her idolized son, she turned for consolation to the father who had given her all the feminine attributes coupled with the heroism of a Godlike man.

We are sure that she met her fate as her father met his — with resignation, and with a spirit of fortitude that shames the prejudiced, silences the foolish, and convinces the fair-minded that there can be enshrined in the human form a nobility of soul that places its possessor above and beyond the "slings and arrows" of biased or envious detractors.

The quotation which follows was written in 1840, sixty years after the birth of Theodosia. Its tenor is so similar to the writings of Mrs. Inchbald and Mary Wollstonecraft, which so greatly influenced Burr in determining the education of his daughter, that one can hardly imagine so little progress in the world, as regards woman's education, in nearly two generations.

— You ask what are my opinions about Woman's Rights. I confess I have not devoted to the subject as it has been generally treated. — On matters of this kind, probably, has there been uttered so much of false reasoning, sentiment, shallow philosophy, and sputtering farthing words.

— My feelings are these. We are disgusted when we see a woman, who is capable of the attainment of learning, that the tide of fashion has carried her to, and she has traveled only for its fertility. — The same tide has carried the man, who is likewise capable to remain at home, and to be contented by themselves. — If they carry their heads together, the result will be a man who is a pest to others by accident, and a woman who is a pest by design. — Human duties and proprieties have been so completely lost, and Herod Martineau "If they did, there would be two persons, and two characters, one for man and another for woman."

Whatever can be termed as beautiful, best, and most graceful, a

woman, would likewise be good and graceful in man. You will, perhaps, remind me of courage. If you use the word in its highest signification, I answer that woman, above others, has abundant need of it in her pilgrimage, and the true woman wears it with a quiet grace.

That animal instinct and brute force now govern the world, is painfully apparent in the condition of women everywhere; from the Morduan Tartars, whose ceremony of marriage consists of placing the bride on a mat, and consigning her to the bridegroom, with the words: "Here, wolf, take thy lamb" — to the German remark, that "stiff ale, stinging tobacco, and a girl in her smart dress are the best things." The same thing, softened by the refinements of civilization, peeps out in Stephen's remark, that "woman never looks so interesting as when leaning on the arm of a soldier"; and in Hazlitt's complaint that "it is not easy to keep up a conversation with women in company. It is thought a piece of rudeness to differ from them; it is not quite fair to ask them a *reason* for what they say."

This sort of politeness to women is what men call gallantry; an odious word to every sensible woman, because she sees that it is merely the flimsy veil which foppery throws over sensuality to conceal its grossness. . . .

"There is perhaps no animal," says Hannah More, "so much indebted to subordination for its good behaviour, as woman." . . .

I once heard a very beautiful lecture from R. W. Emerson on Being and Seeming. In the course of many remarks, as true as they were graceful, he urged women to *be* rather than *seem*. He told them that all their laboured education of forms, strict observance of genteel etiquette, tasteful arrangement of the toilette, etc., all this *seeming* would not gain *hearts* like being truly what God made them; that earnest simplicity, the sincerity of nature, would kindle the eye, light up the countenance, and give an inexpressible charm to the plainest features.

The advice was excellent, but the motive by which it was urged brought a flush of indignation over my face. Men were exhorted to *be* rather than to *seem*, that they might fulfil the sacred mission for which their souls were embodied; that they might, in God's freedom, grow up into the full stature of spiritual manhood; but women were urged to simplicity and truthfulness, that they might become more pleasing. . . .

"God is *thy* law, *thou* mine," said Eve to Adam. May Milton be



forgiven for sending that thought "out into everlasting time" in such a jewel setting. What weakness, vanity, frivolity, infirmity of moral purpose, sinful flexibility of principle — in a word, what soul-stifling has been the result of thus putting man in the place of God! . . .

The nearer society approaches to divine order, the less separation will there be in the characters, duties, and pursuits of men and women. Women will not become less gentle and graceful, but men will become more so. Women will not neglect the care and education of their children, but men will find themselves ennobled and refined by sharing those duties with them; and will receive, in turn, cooperation and sympathy in the discharge of various other duties now deemed inappropriate to women. The more women become rational companions, partners, in business and in thought, as well as in affection and amusement, the more highly will men appreciate *home* — that blessed word which opens to the human heart the most perfect glimpse of Heaven, and helps to carry it thither, as on an angel's wings. . . .

The conviction that woman's present position in society is a false one, and therefore reacts disastrously on the happiness and improvement of man, is pressing by slow degrees on the common consciousness, through all the obstacles of bigotry, sensuality, and selfishness. As man approaches to the truest life, he will perceive more and more that there is no separation or discord in their mutual duties. They will be one; but it will be as affection and thought are one; the treble and bass of the same harmonious tune. (100)

Poetic tributes to Theodosia, as well as to her father, have been numerous. The following letter, and the appended poetic selections, are from the pen of a professor of philosophy at Princeton University, from which institution of learning Aaron Burr was graduated in 1772.

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY,

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY.

PRINCETON, N. J., Dec. 18, 1906

Dear Sir:

I sincerely regret that your former letter, for some reason, did not come to my notice. You are at liberty to use any selections from the Burr poems that may be suitable to your purpose. I am very



Mrs. Elizabeth Miller McCullough, 5th cousin to  
Theodosia.

1

much interested in Burr and think you are doing good service in bringing out the favorable side of his life and character. I expect some of these times to publish the Burr poems, of which I have four, in connection with some verse on other subjects. I think you have a splendid theme in Theodosia and look forward with great interest to the appearance of your book.

Yours very sincerely,

ALEXANDER T. ORMOND.

### THEODOSIA<sup>1</sup>

She never came to bless that waiting heart,  
Who in her childhood years the pride had been  
And joy and solace of a father's life,  
Since that dark hour when death his home despoiled  
Of its dear idol and a void had left  
In that fond breast where she had been enshrined.  
Of her he mourned the maid the image bore;  
So, like a vine the father-love entwined  
Her and grew strong. Hers was the heritage  
Of mother-beauty and sweet qualities of heart  
Illumined with the father's subtle gift  
Of intellect and that compelling art  
That made him such a prince of men.

And thus

To womanhood she grew a fair young queen,  
Who by her graciousness all hearts subdued,  
And held them chained by her enthralling charm.  
No marvel then, his idol she became  
Who'd watched the budding of her loveliness  
And found her perfect in both mind and grace;  
While him she with a daughter-love repaid,  
That recked not of the ill laid to his charge,  
But of his high-bred gentleness and the love  
He bare for her.

Their lives thus sweetly blent  
Until that day a lover won her heart  
And bore her to a distant Southern clime,

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1904, by Alexander T. Ormond. Reprinted by permission.

Where, as the honored mistress of his home,  
Among her social peers she peerless moved,  
Blest with the love of husband and that son  
Whom God had given her to satisfy  
The tender longings of a mother's heart.

So sped the years, nor did the present ties  
Supplant the old. The flame of daughter-love  
Burned bright as erst and her sweet loyalty  
Was a pure fire untouched by evil breath;  
Her father's aims, whate'er the world might say,  
To her were high and pure.

And so she gave  
A true heart's fealty and a woman's craft  
To further his designs, dazzled, mayhap,  
By the rich stake for which his subtle mind  
So deeply played; an empire in the South,  
Where she, in regal splendor by his side,  
The sceptre of a gracious realm should wield;  
But without stain. Her nature stood apart  
From evil. In her eyes her fated sire,  
Whom men with dark conspiracy had charged  
Against the public weal, could do no wrong.  
And e'en when fame him such despite had brought,  
And smirched his name with infamy so deep,  
That all men left him or became his foes,  
And his lone head the fateful mark became  
Of execration and of rancorous hate,  
More ruthless far than e'en the darkest deeds  
Of which he stood before the world accused;  
With all the strength of self-forgetting love,  
To him in his disgrace the daughter clung,  
And sought with all her woman's art to shield  
Him from the blast and solace to him bring  
Amid the worse than wreckage of his hopes.

The years went by, but did not lift the curse  
That rested like a blight on all his deeds

And all his dearest efforts brought to naught,  
And though his sun of hope and grace had set  
And Opportunity had barred its gates,  
While struggle as he might, his deeds came back  
Like evil birds to plague their author's head.  
E'en then pride rose superior to despair  
And hope caught resolution from defeat,  
And finding all the doors against him closed  
The sea he crossed, the wizard power to charm  
Of Europe's master genius, in his cause.  
But fate, relentless, dogged and spoiled his plans,  
And flung him back a broken man whose hopes  
Were ashes, but whose heart, still undismayed,  
Against the odds of life fought stoutly on  
And sought, though poor and in disgrace, to build  
Anew the broken fragments of his dream.

Through all this bitter time the daughter's love  
Failed not nor wavered, but a steadfast flame  
It shone the brightest in that darkest hour  
When all men thought him fouled with treason's stain;  
So when the mother-love had been bereft  
And the bright promise of a budding youth  
Brought to untimely end; in its dire loss  
The childless heart yearned for the lonely one,  
Who, but for her, had none to smooth his way  
Or mitigate the harshness of his lot.

Then from a Southern port set sail, she braved  
The grisly horrors of an unknown sea,  
Stillling the terrors of her woman's heart  
With thoughts of that lone watcher in the East;  
But the ill-fated bark that bore her forth  
Was lost, and whether shipwrecked by the storm  
It sank; or, victim of more cruel fate,  
Was taken by some murderous pirate craft,  
Will ne'er be known, though horror freeze the blood  
And pulse stand still before the mystery  
That hides, mayhap in mercy, from our eyes

A vision that no mortal heart could bear.  
 Whate'er the truth may be, that fated ship  
 That out to sea such precious treasure bore,  
 Ne'er to that watcher on the pier brought back  
 The one dear object of his loveless heart.

## EPILOGUE

The winds come hurling up the bay,  
 On foaming crests of white-capped wave,  
 The ice enmails the snow-blanchèd hills,  
 While round the piers the river craft  
 Move in the busy ways of trade.  
 One silent watcher heeds them not,  
 Nor shrinks from winter's austere blasts,  
 His eyes intent the distant sail  
 On far horizon to descry.  
 Long has he waited and the hope  
 Has all but died within his breast,  
 But in despair he clings to hope  
 And still maintains his lonely watch,  
 And still his heart leaps in his breast  
 And o'er the waves a far off sail  
 Appears as convoy of some ship:  
 To be crushed back in mute despair,  
 When for one face he seeks in vain.

She never comes, but there he stands,  
 The martyr of a hopeless grief,  
 A victim of fate's deepest scorn:  
 The most pathetic form the scroll  
 Of time reveals; that takes our ruth  
 By storm and drowns in pity's flood  
 All the harsh judgments that we men  
 Are prone to in our cooler hours.  
 For men may say 'twas Nemesis  
 That wrung this patient watcher's heart;  
 And in the play of circumstance  
 That turned his nobleness to whips



Edward Edwards Drake, 4th cousin to Theodosia.



1

2

3

Of torture, nought but even hand  
Of justice may they see:

And yet

There is a doom that goes beyond  
The scale of merit and makes men  
The sport of fate so hard, that we  
Relent and in our gentler moods  
Find in their anguish what atones  
For much of ill they may have done.  
And this lone watcher on the pier,  
Whate'er of wrong he may have wrought,  
Has suffered so beyond the lot  
Of man; we can but let the thought  
Of all the anguish he has borne  
And the deep pathos of his life  
Plead for a judgment on his deeds  
That's tempered by the pitying mind. (101)

Theodosia Burr was, as has been said of the daughter of another eminent statesman, with whom Aaron Burr was closely identified, "the soul of her father's soul." If we would know the better part of a man who was one of the most remarkable characters of his age, we must know Theodosia, through whom, perhaps, his name, which all the subtlety of his soul was bent on immortalizing, may live to a better fame in the centuries to come than has attended it through the years of that in which he lived. Under the inspiration of her presence, both her father and husband rose to lofty pinnacles in the political arena of their country. Her father, on the eve of her marriage, stood at the very portals of the Chief Magistracy. In less than ten years of political life he had so progressed that the election of 1800 resulted in a tie vote for the Presidency between Aaron Burr and Thomas Jefferson. . . . From the moment Theodosia linked her life with another's, and thus, in a measure, ceased to be a part of his, the retrogressive period of Aaron Burr's life began. To her husband she carried that same inspiring influence which she had wielded over her father. She gave an impetus to his luxuriant and aimless existence, and at the time of the tragedy which ended her twenty-nine years of life, he was occupying the gubernatorial chair of his state. Her life was closely allied not only with the private interests, but with

the political ambitions of both. Her father rarely dined, either among friends or strangers, that her health was not drunk. He made her known to everybody, and during his travels in Europe so interested Jeremy Bentham and other writers in her, that they sent her sets of their books.

At a time when woman was regarded rather as the companion of a man's heart than as his intellectual mate, "the soft green of the soul on which we rest our eyes that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects," Theodosia Burr's mental faculties were so developed and trained as to fit her for the most complete and sympathetic union with her father, husband, and son. . . . Theodosia's life is an evidence of how exalted was her love, when, with all the world against him, she was yet proud to be his daughter. . . .

From her close association with her mother under such circumstances (during her mother's illness) her receptive mind became imbued with the beauties of the Christian philosophy, which her father, though a grandson of Jonathan Edwards, and son of the Rev. Aaron Burr, founder and first President of Princeton College, had not included in the course of studies so exactly marked out for her. . . .

After her mother's death, Burr, who had a profound admiration for the language, literature, and people of France, consigned her to a French governess. She acquired a complete mastery of that tongue and the fluency with which she spoke it added much to the grace with which she presided over her father's home, for Burr frequently entertained Frenchmen. Louis Philippe, Jerome Bonaparte, Talleyrand, and Volney were all at various times his guests at Richmond Hill. . . .

She had much of her mother's self-poise and elegance of manner together with her father's dignity and wit. When she reached maturity, though short in stature like her father's family, she carried herself with a noble dignity, which, with a certain lofty benevolence of countenance, the refinement of her features, the frank intelligence of her brow, the healthful bloom of her complexion made her singularly beautiful. . . .

Her life was full of happiness at this time, with Hamilton's wife and daughters among her friends, her father one of the President's possibilities, and she enjoying much of his society, accompanying him frequently to Albany on horseback and visiting in the neighborhood while he transacted his business at the capital. (To the end of 1800.) . . .

"I find that Luther Martin's idolatrous admiration of Mrs. Alston," wrote Blennerhassett, "is almost as excessive as my own, but far more beneficial to his interests and less injurious to his judgment, as it is the medium of his blind attachment to her father, whose secrets and aims, past, present, and to come, he is and wishes to remain ignorant of. Nor can he see a speck in the character of Alston, for the best of all reasons with him — namely, that Alston has such a wife." (102)

## TO THEODOSIA

Beloved child no more to share  
An earthly father's tender care,  
You fly above with wingéd feet  
And kneel before the judgment seat.

Your earthly record in The Book  
An angel scans with pleaséd look,  
And to the Judge's eager sight  
Presents a page, unsullied, white.

No time to pass in penitence  
Or its required recompense.  
Through azure seas with stars bedight  
Once more you take your angel flight.

You find a place of perfect bliss,  
A world much better, yet like this,  
In which those beings who below  
No physical delights did know.

Here find those joys so long concealed,  
To their ecstatic gaze revealed;  
And those who pleasure sought, but failed,  
Here find their senses all regaled.

Not long you stay, but onward fly,  
Your soul a higher field would try;  
And spiritual and mental joy  
Your every moment now employ.

There's nothing lost in life, you find,  
The mental work of man confined  
In one vast library appears,  
The fruitage of six thousand years.

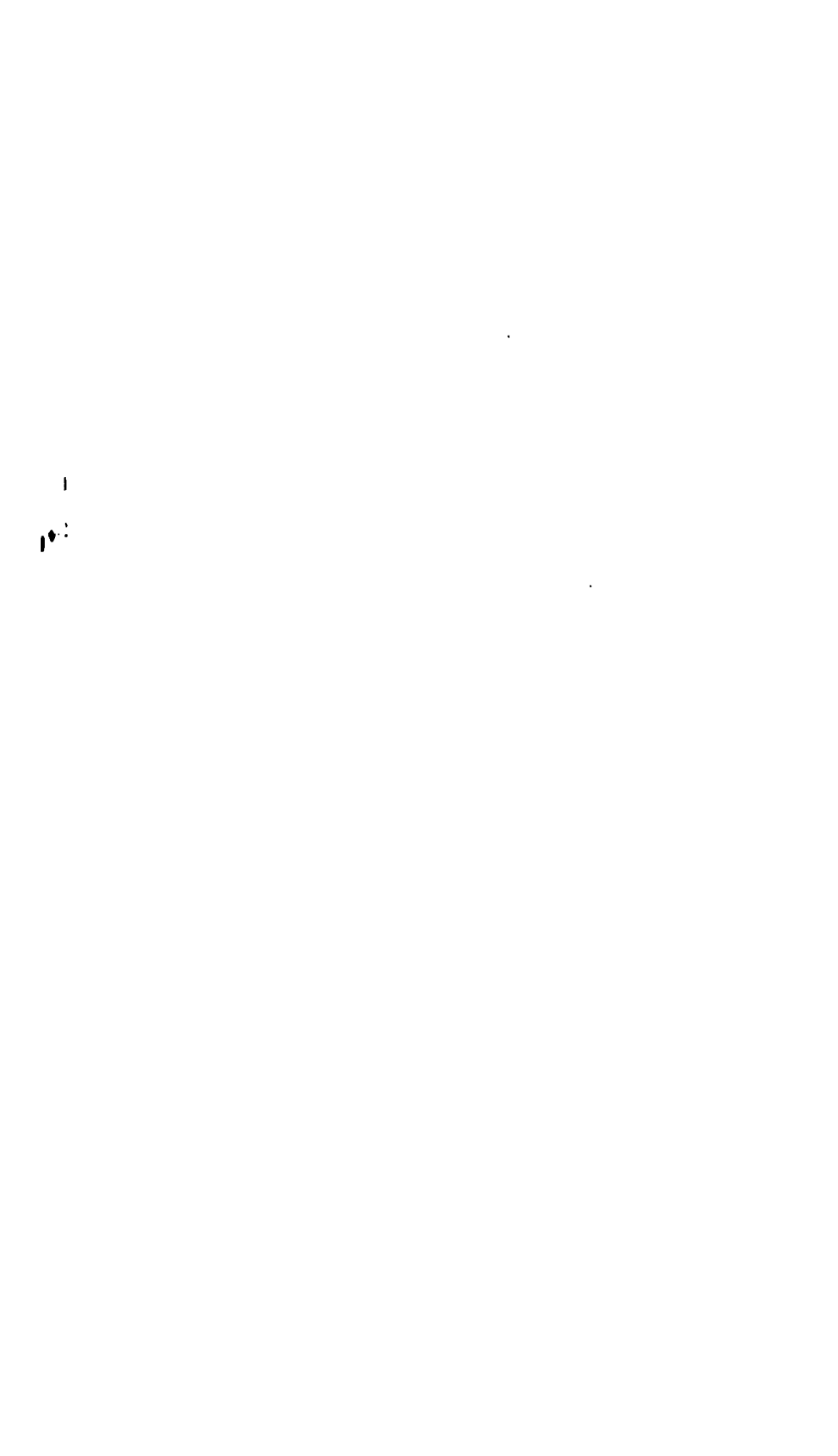
You onward fly, the spark divine  
In higher sphere is formed to shine,  
'Til thou perfection's Heaven dost see;  
Thou'rt safe at last, but lost to me. (103)

"Who is she that winneth the heart of man, that subdueth to love, and reigneth in his breast?

"Lo, yonder she walketh in maiden sweetness, with innocence in her mind and modesty on her cheek. Her hand seeketh employment, her foot delighteth not in gadding abroad. She is clothed with neatness — she is fed with temperance — humility and meekness are as a crown, circling her head. On her tongue dwelleth music, the sweetness of honor flows from her lips. Decency is in all her words, in her answer are mildness and truth. Submission and obedience are the lessons of her life, and peace and happiness are her reward. Before her step walketh Prudence, and Virtue attendeth at her right hand. Her eyes speaketh softness and love, but Discretion with a scepter setteth on her brow. The tongue of the licentious is dumb in her presence, the awe of her virtue keepeth him silent. When scandal is busy, and the fame of her neighbor is tossed from tongue to tongue, charity and good nature open not her mouth, the finger of silence resteth on her lips. Her breast is the mansion of goodness, and therefore she suspecteth no evil in others. Happy the man that shall make her his wife, happy the child that shall call her mother. She presideth in the house, and there is peace. She commandeth with judgment and is obeyed. She ariseth in the morning, she considereth her affairs and appointeth unto everyone their proper business. The care of her family is her whole delight; to that alone she applyeth her study, and elegance and frugality are seen in her mansion. The prudence of her management is honor to her husband, and he heareth her praise with secret delight. She informeth the minds of her children with wisdom, she fashioneth their manners after the example of her own goodness. The word of her mouth is the law of their youth. The motion of her eye commandeth obedience. She speaketh! and



**Mrs. Stella Edwards Pierpont Drake, 4th  
cousin to Theodosia.**



her servants fly. She pointeth! and the thing is done; for the law of love is in their hearts, and her kindness addeth wings to their feet. In prosperity she is not puffed up, in adversity she healeth the wounds of fortune with patience. The troubles of her husband are alleviated by her counsels, and sweetened by her endearments; he putteth his heart in her bosom and receiveth comfort." (104)

Her tender, loyal devotion to her father was most admirable. Not her love for her husband, not the joys and hopes, cares and sorrows of maternity could supersede or weaken it. She was always the daughter. Theodosia's habits of life were, so I have heard my mother say, much like those of Mrs. Kemble. She was a famous walker and skater, and accompanied her father on shooting and fishing excursions. As a horsewoman she was unsurpassed, and, on her visit to her New England friends, sometimes astonished their quiet neighbors by riding over the country, taking walls and ditches in flying leaps. Yet she was, in the best sense of the word, feminine and essentially a lady.

Mrs. Lippincott believed the "pirate's story."

The few passengers, he said, and such of the crew as were disinclined to enlist under their black banner, they compelled to "walk the plank." Among the passengers was one lady, who remonstrated against having her hands bound and being blindfolded, promising to make no resistance. So they let her have her way, and she stepped quietly onto the plank and, with eyes wide open, walked off into the sea. I have always believed that the woman who met her fate in this grand Roman way was the daughter of Aaron Burr, Theodosia Alston. (105)

In this brilliant man's entire character there is one redeeming feature — he loved his only child, the beautiful and accomplished Theodosia, with a love and devotion rarely equalled and never excelled. Whatever of heart he possessed, he lavished upon her; his care, his solicitude, his labor for her was enthusiastic and unceasing, and she repaid him in Scripture measure — "heaped up, pressed down, and running over." In the midst of his misfortunes, in the depths of his ignominy, when the rest of his countrymen were clamoring for his blood, she writes him daily, and always bidding him to be of good cheer, while she is hastening to his beloved presence to stand side by side with him in the prisoner's dock and share his quarters in the



Richmond penitentiary. . . . Theodosia's illustrious love for her father overtops them all, and half redeems his fame, for it stands to reason, and to nature, that there must have been something in a man who could inspire such deathless affection in a heart so pure as hers. She died at last in an effort and on a voyage to once more clasp him to her faithful breast. Her death, awful in its mystery, impossible to think of even now without a shudder! . . .

If this man's sins be as scarlet — if in the forum of justice or at the bar of public opinion, any plea can be urged for this illustrious culprit, what father, thoroughly in love with an only daughter, will not think more kindly of Aaron Burr, and will not feel like throwing a flower upon that lonely grave? (106)

Theodosia was a nearly complete realization of her father's ideal of a woman. With a great deal of wit, spirit, and talent, and possessing the elegant vivacity of manner which he so much admired, and a face strikingly beautiful, and strikingly peculiar, she also inherited all that a daughter could inherit of her father's courage and fortitude. In both solid and elegant accomplishments she was far superior to the ladies of her time. After shining in the circles of New York, she led the society of South Carolina, until the time of her father's misfortunes, when she shared his ostracism in both places, and was proud to share it. Her love for her father was more like passion than filial affection. Her faith in his honor and in his worth was absolute and entire. Immovable in that faith, she could cheerfully have braved the scorn, the derision of a world. She would have left all to follow him. She would have renounced her husband, if her husband had faltered in his duty to a father-in-law whose fault, whatever it was, he had shared. No father ever more loved a child, nor more laboriously proved his love, than Aaron Burr. No child ever repaid a father's care and tenderness with a love more constant and devoted than Theodosia. That such a woman could so entirely love and believe in him, was the fact which first led the writer of these lines to suspect that the Aaron Burr who actually lived and walked these streets must have been a very different being indeed from the Aaron Burr of the popular imagination. (107)

The history of every nation is fraught with romantic incidents. England has the story of her Alfred; Scotland of her Wallace, her



MISS MARY M. HARRIS, 1900



Bruce, her Mary, and her Charles Stuart; Ireland her Fitzgerald; France her Man with the Iron Mask, and Marie Antoinette; Poland her Thaddeus, and Russia her Siberian exiles. But we very much doubt whether any exceed in interest the singularly touching story of Aaron Burr and his highly accomplished, his beautiful and devoted daughter, Theodosia. . . . She was the wife of Governor Alston of South Carolina. She was married young, and while her father was near the zenith of his fame. She was beautiful and accomplished, a lady of the finest feelings, an elegant writer, a devoted wife, a fond mother and a most dutiful and loving daughter, who clung with redoubled affection to the fortunes of her father, as the clouds of adversity gathered around him, and he was deserted by the friends whom he had formerly cherished. The first duty Burr performed after his arrival here was to acquaint Mrs. Alston of his return. She immediately wrote back to him that she was coming to see him, and would meet him in a few weeks in New York. This letter was couched in the most affectionate terms, and is another evidence of the purity and power of woman's love. (108)

At the age of 17 she was married to Joseph Alston, of South Carolina. At this time she was considered as one of the most accomplished young ladies of the age. She was not only well acquainted with the classics, but also with the modern languages. This extent of education was uncommon in her time; female education has been on the advance ever since. She was considered as a prodigy among the young ladies of that age. Not only the mental faculties of the daughter were carefully cultivated by the father, but a moral and physical discipline was enforced that nerved her for all the accidents of life. She was taught corporeal and moral bravery, in the same lesson. Though small and delicate in her person, she had the spirit of a Roman matron. In South Carolina she was at the head of fashion, and sustained herself with great dignity, without hauteur, caprice, or vanity. She was considered as a model among her countrywomen in that section of the country on her first arrival, and the matron fulfilled the promise of the young lady. (109)

Whatever ambitions Aaron Burr may have had, the love of the father seems to have been capable of transcending them all in priority of interest. He had his own ideal of womanhood, and he devoted himself to informing her mind and training her character in accordance

with that ideal. It so followed that at an age when other little girls are concerned almost wholly with the welfare of their dolls, Theodosia had been taught, in her tenth year, to read Horace and Terence in the original Latin. She moreover spoke French with remarkable grace, and was an apt pupil in Greek. Burr constituted himself her chief tutor. He was careful not to neglect her physical education, and she grew up with every wholesome feminine charm encouraged. It was not considered prudent in that age to foster independence of thought and self-reliance in girls, but Burr was assiduous in instilling into Theodosia the utmost freedom of intellectual view. (110)

Judging, then, by the result of this first ballot, it is only fair to assume that under the existing regulations, the name of no woman will, at any time, be inscribed in the one hundred and fifty panels provided in the Hall of Fame for great Americans.<sup>1</sup> Yet it would be well if at least a single place were reserved among the Immortals for the name of one exalted representative of American womanhood.

The Lady with the Lamp shall stand,  
In the great history of the land,  
The noble type of good,  
Heroic Womanhood!

LONGFELLOW. (111)

We have one little glimpse of Theodosia in her happy days, in the recently published life of Edward Livingston, who was Mayor of New York during part of the Vice-presidency of Aaron Burr. The facetious magistrate, we are told, had the pleasure of escorting Theodosia on a visit to a French frigate lying in the harbor, perhaps one of the vessels that afterwards fired minute guns on the day of Hamilton's funeral. On the way, Mr. Livingston, an inveterate punster, exclaimed: "Now, Theodosia, you must bring none of your sparks on board. They have a magazine, and we should all be blown up!"

The curtain drops on the gay party and the bright scene. Theodosia's unclouded days were nearly spent. This was one of the last of them. (112)

Talleyrand, Volney, Louis Philippe, and others were his guests. In his family they enjoyed the satisfaction of meeting persons who

<sup>1</sup>The names of Maria Mitchell, Emma Willard, and Mary Lyon were added in 1907.

could converse in their own tongue, thus relieving them from the awkwardness of broken English, and making them feel more completely at home. The little Theodosia became the pet of the man who afterwards, as the minister of Napoleon, swayed the destinies of the world. Volney forgot to meditate upon the ruins of empires, when he twined her silken tresses around his finger; and Louis Philippe ceased to sigh over the ruined fortunes of his family, or to pant for the throne he was destined to fill, when she climbed with childish familiarity upon his knee and her joyous smile fell like a sunbeam upon him. (113)

Theodosia's presence at Richmond was of more value to her father than the ablest of his counsel. Everyone appears to have loved, admired, and sympathized with her. "You can't think," wrote Mrs. Blennerhassett, "with what joy and pride I read what Colonel Burr says of his daughter. I never could love one of my own sex as I do her." Blennerhassett himself was not less her friend. Luther Martin, Burr's chief counsel, almost worshiped her. . . . It plainly appears, too, from the letters and journal of Blennerhassett, that Alston did all in his power to promote the acquittal and aid the fallen fortunes of Burr, and that he did so, not because he believed in him, but because he loved his Theodosia. (114)

Theodosia Burr has been a fruitful theme for the author, the artist, and the poet. Mystery has a great and enduring charm. If she had fallen overboard and been drowned, her name would have been forgotten long ago, or have received only casual mention. It seems almost unkind, a sort of treachery, to tell the exact truth as regards her fate and deprive her memory of its constant revival and sympathetic iteration. It is iconoclastic. It destroys an idol of the mind and leaves -- a blank. Truth is mighty, but it often has a depressing effect on romance -- but it must prevail, in the end, no matter how many idols are shattered. (115)

She was carefully educated and became very accomplished, showing particular linguistic talent. After the death of Mrs. Burr she presided over her father's household until her marriage in 1801 to Governor Alston, of South Carolina. Her correspondence with her father after her removal to the South is of great interest and shows continued devotion to his interests. Her beauty, brilliant personality,

and relationship to the famous statesman drew public attention to her especially during her father's trial, and had the effect of exciting the public sympathy on his behalf. (116)

No heartless villain, such as Aaron Burr has been represented, could have won and retained the love of such a wife and of such a daughter as Burr had. When all the other witnesses have been heard let the two Theodosias be summoned, and especially that daughter who showed toward him an affectionate veneration unsurpassed by any recorded in history or romance. Such an advocate as Theodosia the younger must avail in some degree, even though the culprit was brought before the bar of Heaven itself. (117)

It was Burr's philosophy to "accept the inevitable without repining." He resolved in youth always to be cheerful. While he put aside all external things that suggested Theodosia, and bore with his arrowed grace and cheerfulness this profoundest affliction, the death of his daughter robbed him of his incentive to restore himself to power and to regain a fortune. With the life of Theodosia, perished his father's ambition. (118)

There, too, came Judge Ogden Edwards, then residing at the Dongan manor house at West New Brighton, Colonel Richard Cassin and a few other faithful ones whose names are unrecorded. To portrait of his lost Theodosia, who stands forth in history as the noblest of daughters, hung in front of the bed. Through the window he could obtain glimpses of familiar streets where he had once walked with his wife, Theodosia Prevost, the lovely niece of the eccentric Thomas Bartow, of Amboy. (119)

Whatever opinion may be entertained of the father, the mother of the daughter must be revered as one of the loveliest and most excellent of American women, and the revelation of her untimely life can only serve to invest that memory with a more tender and melancholy interest. (120)

Not the least interesting part of Mr. Charles Burr Todd's biographical work called "The True Aaron Burr," is the sketch of Theodosia Burr Alston, whose tragic fate has made her one of the most interesting figures in American history. (121)

I read your statement in the Philadelphia Press of July 24 in a

gard to the fate of Theodosia Burr. Glad always to learn something that might modify the prevailing opinion as to the terrible end of so great a woman. The life of father and daughter is the saddest of all American history. (122)

In Aaron Burr's heart certainly there was space for a very beautiful devotion to his daughter, Theodosia, to bloom. No more exquisite family letters may be found anywhere than those which passed between these two. (123)

Burr's love for his child, Theodosia, and her love for him, is nowhere duplicated in the realm of poetry and romance. (124)

Burr's devotion to his daughter, and that daughter's filial devotion to him, is one of the most pathetic instances in history. (125)

There will I ask of Christ, the Lord,  
This much for him and me;  
Only to live as once on earth  
With Love, — only to be,  
And then awhile, for ever now  
Together, I and he. (126)

The End





## CHAPTER XX

### AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES — BIBLIOGRAPHY — PERSONAL AND TOPICAL INDEX

**T**HEODOSIA'S life story ended long ago, and with the preceding chapter closed our recital of its joys and sorrows; a joyful birth, a tempestuous life, a tragic death. Into her life, and that of her father, came many incidents and almost countless personages. Many of these are recalled or mentioned in the preceding pages; for that reason it has been deemed a duty due the reader to make the pages of the volume accessible in many ways. Three have been selected; the first is:

**AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES.** — Instead of detracting from the symmetry of the book pages by the use of foot-notes, numbers have been inserted in the text referring to the notes beginning on page 461. Each note has a back reference to the page upon which its number may be found in the volume.

As the books, magazines, and newspapers, and names of authors referred to, are not in alphabetical order under "Authorities and References," they have been brought into that form in the second section of this chapter entitled **BIBLIOGRAPHY**.

The third section, **PERSONAL AND TOPICAL INDEX**, needs no explanation. It has been made full, but, it is hoped, not too much so.

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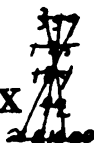
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